

THE
Poor Man's Help,

AND
Young Man's GUIDE:

CONTAINING,

- I. Doctrinal Instructions for the Right Informing of his Judgment.
- II. Practical Directions for the General Course of his Life.
- III. Particular Advices for the Well-managing of every Day:

With Reference to his,

1. Natural Actions.
2. Civil Employments.
3. Necessary Recreations.
4. Religious Duties.

PARTICULARLY,

- I. Prayer; Publick in the Congregation; Private in the Family; Secret in the Closet.
- II. Reading the Holy Scriptures.
- III. Hearing of the Word Preached.
- IV. Receiving of the Lord's Supper.

Unto which is Added,

An Earnest Exhortation unto all Christians, to the Love and Practice of Universal Holiness.

By WILLIAM BURKITT, M. A. of Pembroke Hall in Cambridge, late Vicar of Dedham in Essex.

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Ra. Barker.

The Sixth Edition.

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Mr. Burkitt.*

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To the People of my Charge.

IT is none of the least or most inconsiderable Arguments to evince and prove the Dignity and Preciousness of the Soul of Man; that Almighty God has been pleased to Institute a Sacred and Divine Office in his Church, on purpose for the Benefit and Advantage of it, and to appoint a Distinct Order of Men (his Ministers I mean) whose whole Employ and Concern it is peculiarly to Watch over the Souls of his People, and to be accountable to him for the same. In this Delightful Service of God and of your Souls, I have now worn out more than three Apprenticeships amongst some of you, Endeavouring with my utmost Care and Diligence to excite the careless and unconcerned Sinners on the one hand, and to direct the Weak and Doubting Christian on the other hand to the Practice of their respective Duties: For it is hard to say, from which Religion suffers most, whether from the Want of Zeal in some, or from the Mistakes of Zeal in others. Besides my Publick Advices to you in God's House, your Consciences can Witness for me, that I have taken some Pains (and if God continue my Health, I resolve to take much more) in the duty of Private Inspection and Ministerial Conference with you, in your own Houses, in order to your Preparation for that venerable Ordinance of the Lord's Supper, which to the great Scandal of our most Holy Religion, is so shamefully neglected by multitudes of Persons professing Christianity, of all persuasions amongst us: Exhorting you also to set up Religion and the Worship of God in your private Families, that God may dwell where you dwell. But the Answer of many of you has been this, We want Abilities; we are willing, but not able to perform those Duties without some Assistance: In great Charity therefore to those of you who want such a Help as this, and are willing to make use of it, I put this small Paper into your Hand, which I entreat you to accept both as an Instance of my Duty, and as a Monitor of your Own.

Know assuredly, Sirs, it will be the Portion of many of God's Ministers at the Great Day (I pray God it may never be mine) to be called forth as Witnesses against their own People, when Almighty God will thus interrogate us in the presence of Men and Angels; Did you not Admonish this People of the sin and danger of a resolute Impiety? did you not warn them of their Neglect of Sacraments and Holy Duties, publicly, privately, personally? Must we not plainly and faithfully declare, that all our melting Entreaties and passionate Importunities, could never prevail with you to part with your Sins; but you would choose rather to gratifie your Lusts than to obey

your Reason; Then will our Lord say unto us, I pronounce you pure and innocent from the Blood of these Men; Oh joyful Word to us! But to Sinners will he say, Your Destruction be upon your own Heads; what could I or my Ministers have done more for you that has not been done? therefore Depart ye Cursed into Everlasting Misery: Oh doleful Word to them! God grant that your and my Ears may never hear it.

Beloved, it is your Commendation and my Comfort, that when in this wanton Age, a Spirit of Giddiness has possessed the Minds of many, that they are tossed too and fro with every Wind of Doctrine, trying all things indeed, but holding fast nothing; you have been unanimous in this part of your Duty, keeping close to the Publick Assemblies, and continuing stedfast in the Apostle's Doctrine and Christian Fellowship, and in Breaking of Bread and in Prayers.

But know, that the best Communion and best Religion in the World, the holiest Doctrine and the purest Worship, will be of no avail to impure Worshippers and impure Livers: God grant therefore that you and I may Oblige our selves to such an Eminent and Exemplary Piety of Conversation, in all the several Instances of our Duty, as may render the unspotted Religion of the Holy Jesus venerable to the World? And may Almighty God, who sometimes delights to do great things by weak means, be pleased to succeed these well-design'd Endeavours of mine, in order to your Advantage, that so in God's House, and in your own also, the most solemn Acts and Exercises of Religious Worship, may be performed by you with such a becoming gravity and sincerity of Devotion, that the Name of our Holy Lord may be glorified, your Souls comforted with the sense of Pardon and Peace here, and everlastingly refreshed with Joys unspeakable and full of Glory hereafter; so prayeth

Your Affectionate Minister,

Dedham, 1693.

WILLIAM BURKITT

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THE
POOR MAN'S HELP,
AND
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CHAP. I. *Containing Doctrinal Instructions for the right informing of the Judgment.*

Nothing concerns Mankind in general so much as the Salvation of their Souls: This is the one thing Needful, and that which they are obliged above all things to mind and regard: But it concerns Poor Men especially to secure the Salvation of their never-dying Souls, lest they be miserable in both Worlds; for they tasting but little of the comforts and sweetness of this Life, had need take care above others, that they miss not the Consolations and Happiness of the next.

Now in Order to every Man's Salvation hereafter, three things are indispensibly necessary here; namely, a right Knowledge, a right Faith, and a Righteous Life. Knowledge is the Foundation of our Faith, and Faith the Foundation of our Obedience, and Obedience the Condition of our Happiness; for although a Man may know the Will of God and not do it, yet he can never do it acceptably and not know it. A wilfully Ignorant Man can neither serve God, nor be saved by him.

Towards the Attaining of this Knowledge and Belief, which is so absolutely necessary to Salvation, the great things required are, an Humble Sense of our own Ignorance, a Teachable Disposition and Readiness of Mind to receive Instruction, accompanied with an Earnest Invocation and Fervent Calling upon God for the Promised Illuminations of his Holy Spirit. More particularly the Chief and Fundamental Principles of our Religion, necessary to be known and believed by all Persons in Order to their Everlasting Salvation, are these four. I. Concerning God. II. Concerning Man. III. Concerning Jesus Christ, the Mediator between God and Man. IV. Concerning the way and means to obtain Salvation by Christ, the only Mediator.

I. Concerning GOD.

It is necessary to Know and Believe the following Severals: Namely, That God is an Infinite, Invisible, and Immortal Spirit, without Bodily Parts or Passions, Almighty, All-knowing, every where Present,

Doctrinal Instructions

most Wise and Holy, most Just and Righteous, most Good and Gracious: The following Scriptures will Confirm your Belief of the Truth of this, viz. St. John 4. 24. *God is a Spirit.* St. Luke 24. 39. *A Spirit hath not flesh and bones:* Exod. 34. v. 6, 7. *The Lord passed by and proclaimed his Name, the Lord God gracious and merciful, long suffering, abundant in Goodness and Truth.*

2. That there is but one true and ever-living God, who being One in Nature, is yet Three in Person, namely the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, each Person having his proper Part and Office in the Salvation of lost Sinners, namely the Father as the Original and Fountain, the Son as the Manager and Transfacter of it, and the Holy Ghost as the Applier and Sealer of it. See the following Scriptures, Deut. 6. 4. *The Lord thy God is one Lord:* 1 John 5. 7. *There are three that bear Record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these Three are One:* St. John 15. 26. *But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me,* Eph. 4. 30. *Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby you are sealed unto the day of Redemption,*

3. That this ever-living and only living Lord God, by his Almighty Power and Infinite Wisdom, Created the World and all things therein out of nothing, and by his effectual Providence doth sustain and preserve them in being; and doth likewise govern and dispose of all things to his own glory: Nehem. 9. v. 6. *Thou art Lord alone who hast made the Heavens and the Heaven of Heavens, with all their host, the Earth and all things that are therein, and thou preservest them all.*

II. Concerning Man.

We are to Know and Believe,

1. That Almighty God Created Man (*Adam*) after his own Image, which consisted in Knowledge, Righteousness and true Holiness, giving him an holy Law, for the Rule of his Obedience, with Power to keep it, and a promise of Life upon Condition of keeping it, see Gen. 1. 27. *So God created Man in his own Image, in the Image of God created he him:* Eccles. 7. 29. *This only have I found, that God made man upright.*

2. That Man (*Adam*) being Created in an holy State, yet in a mutable Condition, and under a possibility of falling, being tempted by Satan, and left to the freedom of his own will, did actually fall from his Estate of Innocency and Integrity into a State of Sin and Misery: Gen. 3. 6. *And when the Woman saw that the Tree was good for Food, and pleasant to the Eye, she took thereof and did Eat, and gave also unto her Husband, and he did eat:* Eccles. 7. 29. *God hath made Man upright, but he hath found out many Inventions.*

3. That by reason of Man's Fall, his Nature is wholly Corrupted with Original Sin, which is the Seed and Root of all other Sins, derived upon us by Natural Generation, whereby we are disabled to that which is spiritually good, and inclined to that which is Evil and Sinful,

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ful, Gen. 5. 3. And Adam begat a Son in his own likeness, after his Image: Psal. 51. 5. Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my Mother conceive me: Rom. 8. v. 2. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

4. That every Man doth further fall into manifold Actual Sins in the daily Course of his Life, transgressing every one of God's holy Commandments, either in Thought, Word or Deed; see Eccles. 7. v. 20. There is not a just Man upon Earth, that doth good and sinneth not: Rom. 3. v. 10, & 23. There is not one righteous man, no not one, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

5. That the Punishment due to every sin is Death and Hell; all Miseries Temporal, Spiritual and Eternal: Rom. 6. 23. The Wages of Sin is Death: 2 Thes. 1. 9. They shall be punished with everlasting Destruction from the Presence of the Lord, and from the Glory of his Power.

6. That Almighty God pitying the deplorable Misery of our fallen Estate, has found out a Way, and appointed a Means for our Deliverance from the Power and Punishment of Sin, by a Mediator and Redeemer: Titus 3. v. 4, 5, 6. After that the Kindness and Love of God our Saviour towards Man appeared, according to his Mercy he saved us, by the washing of Regeneration and Renewing of the Holy Ghost.

III. Concerning Christ the Mediator between God and Man.

We ought to know and Believe,

1. That Jesus Christ the Eternal Son of God, the second Person in the Trinity, is the only Redeemer of lost Man, and the only Mediator betwixt God and Man, from whom alone we are to expect Life and Salvation: 1 Tim. 2. 5. There is one God and one Mediator betwixt God and Man, the Man Christ Jesus: Acts 4. 12. Neither is there Salvation in any other, for there is no other Name given under Heaven by whom we must be saved.

2. That Jesus Christ our Redeemer was both God and Man, having two Natures in one Person, a Divine Nature as he was God, and an Humane Nature as Man; in which Humane Nature he suffered for Sinners, and in his Divine Nature satisfied the Justice of God for sin: Acts 20. 28. Feed the Church of God which he hath purchased with his own Blood: Heb. 10. v. 10. By the which Will we are sanctified thro' the offering of the Body of Jesus Christ once for all.

3. That Christ our Redeemer having taken upon him our Nature, lived here upon Earth about three and thirty Years, and did in our stead and for our sin give full Satisfaction to the Justice of his Father, by endeavouring most grievous Torments in his Soul, and by undergoing most painful Sufferings in his Body, was Crucified, Died, and was Buried; and by his Death did Conquer Sin and Satan, Death and Hell: Read the 26th, and 27th Chapter of St. Matthew, which give a large Account of our Saviour's Sufferings.

4. That Jesus Christ on the third Day Arose again from the Dead, with the same Body in which he suffered, with which Body also he Ascended into Heaven, and sitteth there at the right hand of his Father to intercede for us, and by his Intercession in Heaven, making Application of that Redemption which he wrought on Earth, from whence at the End of the World he shall come again to Judge both Man and Devils, and to determine their Final and Eternal State; see Rom. 8. v. 34. *Who is he that condemneth, it is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh Intercession for us*; St. Matth. 13. v. 41, 42. *The Son of Man shall send forth his Angels, and they shall gather out of his Kingdom all things which offend, and them that do iniquity, and shall cast them into a Furnace of Fire, where shall be wailing and weeping, &c.*

IV. Concerning the Way and Means to obtain
Salvation by Christ.

1. That the way and means appointed by God for the Sinners Salvation thro' Jesus Christ the Redeemer, is by Faith, Repentance, and sincere Obedience: So saith the Apostle, Eph. 2. 8. *By Grace ye are saved thro' Faith*, Act. 11. 18. *Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life*; Heb. 5. v. 9. *Christ became the Author of Eternal Salvation to them that obey him*.

2. That saving Faith is a Grace of the Holy Spirit, wrought in us by the Ministry of the Word: Whereby we do in our Understandings Assent to the Doctrine of the Gospel as true, and with our Wills embrace it as good: And according to that Revelation, do depend upon the Merits of Christ alone for pardon of Sin, and eternal Life, on such conditions as the Gospel has assured them upon, Rom. 10. v. 10. *With the heart man believeth unto Righteousness*: St. John 6. v. 68, 69. *We believe and are sure that thou art Christ the Son of the living God; to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of Eternal Life*.

3. That true Repentance consists in an hearty Trouble and Sorrow for sin past: In an Humble Acknowledgment and Penitential Confession of sin both past and present, but chiefly in such stedfast Purposes and Resolutions against sin for the time to come, as do produce Actual Reformation and Amendment of Life, 2 Cor. 7. 11. *Ye sorrowed, after a Godly sort, what carefulness did it work in you, yea what indignation, yea what fear, yea what vehement desire, yea what revenge!* Isa. 55. 7. *Let the Wicked forsake his way, and turn, &c.*

4. That Repentance being a real Change and Reformation of our Lives, to defer it to a sick bed and a dying hour, puts the Soul upon a mighty hazard, it being then impossible to know the truth of our Repentance, when we want time and opportunity to make trial of the sincerity of it, St. Mat. 3. 8. *Bring forth therefore fruits meet for Repentance*. Isa. 55. 6. *Seek ye now the Lord whilst he may be found, and call upon him whilst he is near*. 1 Cor. 6. 2. *Behold now is the accepted time*.

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5. That Sincere obedience consists in a conformity of Heart and Life to the Word and Will of God, from an unfeigned Love to God, and a sincere Delight in keeping his Commandments. *Psal. 40. 8. I delight to do thy will, oh my God, yea thy Law is within my heart. Acts 24. 16. Herein do I exercise my self, to keep always a Conscience void of offence towards God, and towards all men.*

6. That the Obedience of the best of Christians in this Life, when at the best, is but imperfect, attended with much weakness, and accompanied with manifold imperfections: Which yet upon our humble acknowledgment, God will graciously pardon, and for Christ's sake mercifully accept. *Job 9. v. 20. If I justify my self, my own mouth shall condemn me, If I say I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse, 2 Cor. 30. 18, 19, 20. The good Lord pardon every one that prepareth his heart to seek God, tho' he be not cleansed according to the purification of the Sanctuary: And the Lord bearkned to Hezekiah, and healed the People.*

7. That no Obedience is sincere but that which is Universal, and causes us to have an abiding respect unto all God's Commandments to obey them, and to all Christ's Institutions to observe and follow them: *Psal. 119. 9. Then shall I not be ashamed when I have respect unto all thy Commandments, St. Mat. 28. 20. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.*

8. That the great Commands of God, are to Love him with all our Hearts, with all our Souls, with all our Strength, and to love our Neighbour as our selves. *Mat. 22. 37, 38. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, &c. This is the first and great Commandment, and the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self.*

9. That the great Institution of Jesus Christ under the Gospel, are his Word and Sacraments, to wit, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, which he commands all his Disciples and Followers most Religiously to celebrate until his coming again unto Judgment. *St. Matth. 28. ult. Go teach all Nations, Baptizing them, &c. And lo I am with you always even unto the end of the World. 1 Cor. 11. 26. As oft as ye eat this Bread, and drink this Cup, ye shew the Lord's death till he come.*

10. That Baptism is a holy Institution of our Saviour's, for the benefit of Believers and their Seed: Wherein by the outward washing with Water in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, it signifies the spiritual washing of the Soul by the Blood and Spirit of Christ, from the guilt and filth of sin, *Eph. 5. 25, 26. Christ loved his Church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it, by the washing of Water and the Word.*

11. That the Lord's Supper is an holy Ordinance, wherein by Bread broken and Wine poured out, the Death of Christ is Shewed forth, and all the Benefits of his Death are Represented, Applied, and Sealed unto Worthy Receivers. *1 Cor. 10. 16. The Cup of Blessing which we bless is it not the Communion of the Blood of Christ? &c.*

12. That the end of this Ordinance is to be a Memorial of Christ's Death: To strengthen our Faith in him: To encrease our Communion with him: To be a Spiritual Banquet, wherein we feed upon him in order to our Spiritual Nourishment and Growth in Grace, 1 Cor. 11. 26. *As oft as ye eat this Bread and Drink this Cup, ye shew forth the Lords death till he come.*

13. That all such as are truly penitent for sin past, and holily resolved against sin, and for a new life for the time to come, tho' their grace be weak, their doubts many, and their fears great, yet ought they often to come to this Heavenly Banquet for Spiritual strength and inward comfort. St. John 6. 51. *I am the living Bread which came down from Heaven, if any man eat of this Bread he shall live for ever.*

14. That it is the duty of every one who would be a Worthy Receiver of the Lord's Supper, to prepare himself therunto, by previous Examination, and to make proof of his Knowledge, Faith and Charity, and so to eat of this Bread and drink of this Cup. See 1 Cor. 11. 28. *But let a Man examine himself, and so let him eat of that Bread and drink of that Cup.*

15. That the danger of Unworthy Refusing, is certainly as great as the danger of Unworthy Receiving: The neglects of duty are as dangerous and damnable as the Acts of sin, and sins of omission are certainly damning as well as sins of commission. St. Mat. 3. 10. *Every Tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is cut down and cast into the fire.*

16. That God hath appointed a time in which he will Judge all Persons as well for their omissions of good, as for their commissions of evil, and every one shall receive an unalterable Sentence according to his Works, Rev. 20. 12. *I saw the Dead standing before God, and the Dead were Judged according to their Works.*

17. That those who have done good, shall be absolved and accepted, and shall inherit the Kingdom of Glory prepared for them, where they shall both see and resemble their Blessed Saviour in perfect holiness and endless happiness.

18. That such as have here done evil and died in their Impenitency, shall suffer an everlasting Imprisonment with Devils and damned Spirits, in Blackness of Darkness for ever: Undergoing the perpetual gnawings of the Worm that dieth not, and the extrem torments of the fire which never shall be quenched: St. John 5. 28. *Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming in which all that are in the Grave shall hear his voice, and they shall come forth, they that have done good unto the Resurrection of Life, and they that have done evil unto the Resurrection of Damnation.*

CHAP. II. Concerning Practical Directions for the General Course of Life.

I. Directions. For the right Ordering of our Thoughts.

Cogito Ergo sum; I Think, therefore I am, is a prime Conclusion with the Modern and Ingenious Philosopher. Thinking is the surest Proof and Evidence of Being: I cannot so certainly conclude I am, because I walk, I drink, I see and hear, because the Senses are oft-times deceived. but if I be sure I Think, I am sure I Am, because Thinking is an Operation that flows from Being. Now as bare Thinking is an Argument of meer Being, so Well Thinking is an Evidence of Well-being; for says the wise Man, *Prov. 23. v. 7. As a Man Thinketh in his Heart, so is he.*

Therefore in Order to the right Governing of thy daily Thoughts, Observe the following Rules.

1. Think frequently with thy self, that as thy Pulse will be continually beating, so thy Thoughts will be always working to thy Dying Hour, and therefore had need be well employed.

2. Think often what a World of Sin a Man may be guilty of in his Thoughts, Atheism, Blasphemy, Idolatry, Adultery, Murder, and what not? And Believe thy self to be no less Accountable to God for the Sin of thy Thoughts, than of thy Words and Actions, *Eccles. 12. 14. God shall bring every secret thing into Judgment, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.*

3. Think often what a glorious Theme and Subject for thy Thoughts God has provided and laid before thee; as himself in his Attributes, his Son in his Nature, Life, and Actions, his holy Spirit in all its gracious Operations, his Word and Promises, his Works of Creation, Preservation and Redemption, &c. Astronomy does but Surveigh a Dunghil in comparison of what Christianity Contemplates: Stars are but dirty Clods, compared with that Glory which lies within the reach of the Christian's Thoughts.

4. Think every Morning what good Offices thou hast to do that Day, and so Think all that Day as if all thy Thoughts were written on thy Forehead for the whole World to read them, and so Act every Day, as if thou hadst a thousand Eyes upon thee.

5. Think thy own Condition to be certainly the best, because the Wisdom of God sees it best for thee; if thou hast not as much as others, yet thou hast that which is Appointed for thee: In Heaven our Reward shall be, not according to the good things we have received here, but according to the good Works which we have done here. At the Reckoning Day he will be accounted the wisest Man that has laid out his Time in good Duties, and his Treasure in good Works.

6. Think Contentment to be the truest Riches, and Covetousness the greatest Poverty. He is not Rich that has much, but he that has enough; that Man is Poor who Covets more, and yet wants a Heart to enjoy what he has already.

7. Think

7. Think it no part of thy Business curiously to Search into other Mens Lives, but narrowly to inspect the Errors of thine own: It is much better to amend one Fault in our selves, than to find out an hundred Faults in another.

8. Think it a greater Virtue to forgive one Injury, than to do many Kindnesses, because it is harder and more against Nature.

9. Think him no True Friend whom one Injury can make thine Enemy. He must have no Friends that will have a Friend with no Faults.

10. Take a View of thy Thoughts every Night, as the Master does of his Servants Work every Day, and so think (if possible) of all things now, as thou wilt think of them when passing into Eternity.

II. Direction. For the right Ordering of our Words.

Speech is a very Noble and Advantageous Benefit to Man, by which he excels the whole Creation: Our Tongue is our Glory, the Index and Expresser of our Mind and Thoughts, the Instrument of our Creator's Praise; and there is no Subject so sublime and honourable for the Tongue of Man to be employed about, as the Word and Works of God: There is a great Difficulty in governing the Tongue, it being a proud and active Member, and therefore the Scripture places much of Religion in *Bridling of the Tongue*, St. James 1. 26.

It is the great Wisdom of a Man to know both when and what to speak, and also how and when to be silent; for a Man may sin both ways, by over silence as well as by over-much speaking. Wo unto us, if we want a Tongue to publish God's Truth, to plead God's Cause, to Vindicate God's Honour, and to sound forth God's Praise.

To avoid all Extrems, Remember these Rules:

1. Accustom not thy self to speaking over much, and before thou speakest, consider; let not thy Tongue run, before Reason and Judgment bid it go; if the Heart doth not premeditate, the Tongue must necessarily precipitate.

2. Let the Matter of your Speech be both true and profitable: True (logically) by an Agreement betwixt the Thing and your Words, without falshood; and True (morally) by an Agreement betwixt your Tongue and your Heart, without Dissimulation.

3. Speak always to God, with extraordinary Dread and Caution, and always of him, with a profound Veneration and Awfulness of Regard.

4. Speak of Holy Things frequently, but always seriously, yet place not Religion in Talk only, nor measure Goodness by good Words; 'tis much easier to Talk like a Saint than to be one.

5. Speak well of all Men, till thou knowest otherwise, and when thou canst not speak well, be Silent.

6. Speak not well of any undeservedly, that's sordid Flattery: Speak not well of thy self, tho' never so deserving, that's Vain-glory, but

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value more a good Conscience than a good Commendation.

7. Speak not in high Commendation of any Man to his Face, nor Censure any Man behind his Back; but if thou knowest any thing good of him, tell it unto others, if any thing ill, tell it privately and prudently to himself.

8. Speak not well of thy self, tho' others do so, and yet give no Occasion to others to speak otherwise than well of thee: Neither speak thine own Praise, nor greedily hear them, but when any thing relates to thy own Commendation, Watch against the Vanity of Self-Appraising.

9. Speak not Censoriously of thy Betters, nor Scornfully of thy Inferiors, nor Boastfully of thy self.

10. Speak always Truth, especially when called forth to speak it, and abhor Lying as you abhor the Devil, who is the Father of Lies and the Tormentor of Liars.

11. Swear not falsely before a Magistrate, for this is an Appeal to God as your Judge, and an Engagement of God to be your Avenger: Therefore whenever you take an Oath, look that the Cause of it be necessary and weighty, the Manner of it grave and solemn, and the End of it honest and sincere.

12. Swear not rashly in your ordinary Discourse, for this will render the Truth of all you say suspected by wise Men: He that swears vainly, ought not to be much credited when he speaks truly; because he that dreads not an Oath, will not Tremble at a Lie.

III. Direction. For the right Ordering of our Actions.

Our Actions having a far greater Aptitude than our Words, to make an Impression upon the Minds and Manners of Men whom we converse with, it highly concerns us to exercise great Watchfulness over our selves in all Actions of humane Life, and to be exactly circumspect in our daily walking, performing our Duty to God, our Neighbour, and our selves, in such a manner that God may be glorified, Religion adorned, our Neighbour edified, and our own Souls saved. In order to that end the following Rules may be helpful.

1. Look carefully that Love to God and Obedience to his Commands, be the Principle and Spring from whence the Actions flow, and that the Glory of God and the Salvation of thy Soul be the End to which all thy Actions tend; and that the Word of God be thy Rule and Guide in every Enterprize and Undertaking, *Gal. 6.* As many as walk by this Rule, peace be on them, and mercy.

2. Enterprize and undertake no Action without Advice from Heaven, asking Council of God by Prayer. He blesteth or blasteth our Endeavours, according as we own our Dependency upon him, and Engagements to him.

3. Then

3. Then serve the Providence of God in the Use of all lawful and fit Means for attaining thy ends in all honest undertakings, having first recommended them to the Divine Blessing. For know, that the Providence of God ordinarily works in a way of Concurrence with our Endeavours: Follow therefore Providence, but not run before it.

4. Do no Action upon which thou mayest not warrantably pray for God's Blessing: Do nothing for which thou shalt need to ask God's Pardon: Let thy first care be, not to do an ill Action, thy next care is to Repent of it.

5. Offend not either God or thy Neighbour knowingly and deliberately; but if thou fallest by Surprise, confess it, for Confession is some part of satisfaction: By denying a little sin, thou makest it great; but by confessing a great sin to God, thou makest it as none at all.

6. Be strictly just in all thy Dealings with Man, and think not thy self discharged from the Duty of Righteousness towards thy Neighbour, by any extraordinary measures of pretended Zeal and Piety towards God: For all such Pretences to Piety are but Hypocrisie, if men be not really honest as well as seemingly devout. And Dishonesty and Unrighteousness will as certainly shut men out of Heaven, as Impiety and Prophaneness, 1 Cor. 6. 9.

7. Think it not sufficient that you do not an ill thing, but you must not do an hard thing to any, but be kind and charitable as well as just and honest; always endeavouring to do the utmost good you can, by a Life of universal Usefulness.

8. Deride not any man's Deformities, but Bless God that they are not *thine*. Men shall answer at God's Bar for their vicious Habits, but not for their natural Imperfections.

9. Never forget the Kindnesses which others do for you: Never upbraid others with the Courtesies which you do for them.

10. Be Covetous of nothing but of Doing Good, and Prodigal of nothing but of Good Counsel.

11. Promise nothing which may prejudice thee in the performance, but perform what thou hast promised, tho' it be to thy real prejudice. A wise man measures his Promises by his Abilities, but he measures his Performances by his Promises.

12. Always judge of men by their Conversation towards God, never by God's Dispensations towards them.

13. Let not what is falsely *talkt* of thee, ever *trouble* thee, for an ill Report makes no Body an ill man: Be careful to do nothing that deserves to be ill spoken of; and then let it never Trouble thee to be ill spoken of undeservedly.

14. Revenge not an injury tho' thou couldest, yet shew that thou art able to revenge it if thou wouldest. To Revenge a Wrong done unto thee, is a greater wrong to thy self, than the Injury received by thee. Beware when others hurt thee, that thou hurt not thy self.

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15. Unwillingly undertake a suit of Law, and most willingly make an end of it. Choose rather to buy Quietness with some Loss, than to gain much by Strife and Contention: For going to Law, is one of those lawful things which is very difficultly managed without Sin: 'Tis rare, if a man wrongs not his Soul by righting his Estate.

16. Look upon Obedience to the Authority which God has set over you, in all lawful and unforbidden things, to be a necessary and indispensable Duty. In all such Cases it is not for men of a private Capacity to Dispute but to Obey.

CHAP. III. *Containing particular Advice for the well managing of every Day.*

1. **B**egin and End every Day with God: In the Morning when you awake, accustom your self to think first upon God, and let him have your first awaking Thoughts; lift up your Hearts to God reverently and thankfully for the rest of the Night past; and let your first Discourse be agreeable to your Thoughts, *Psal. 139. 19. When I awake I am still with thee.*

2. Spend that Time which must necessarily be allowed for the Dressing your selves, in fruitful Meditation, of the great Mercy of a Night's Rest, and of your renewed Time: Think how many spent that Night in Hell, how many in a Prison, how many Worried out that Night in tormenting Pains and languishing Distempers, weary of their Beds and their Lives together. Think also how many Souls were the last Night summoned from their Bodies to Appear before the Dreadful God, and how soon your last Night may come.

3. Let Secret Prayer by your self alone be constantly performed before the Work of the Day be Undertaken: It is much better to go from Prayer to Business, than from Business to Prayer, in regard of the Mind's freedom from Distracting Thoughts: Because also, if the World gets the Start of Religion in the Morning, 'tis hard for Religion to Overtake the World all the Day after.

4. Let Family-Worship be performed constantly and seasonably, at that Hour which is freest in regard of Interruption, and look that it be Reverently and Spiritually performed; call not then for the Cushion when there is more need of the Pillow.

5. Then set about and follow the Labours of your Calling with Diligence and Industry: He that says, *Be fervent in Prayer*, lays also, *Be not slothful in Business*, Rom. 12. and let the Day be spent in your Calling watchfully, watching your Company you converse with, and the Corruption which you find stirring in you; but especially Watch against those Temptations, which the Company you are with, the Place you are in, or the Work and Calling you are about, may expose you to, or lay you under.

6. When

6. When about your Calling; if alone, improve the Time in fruitful Meditation, and holy Ejaculations, or short Prayers, which are no Hindrance at all to your Worldly Business; if in Company, in such profitable Discourse as may tend to make thy self and others both Wiser and Better.

7. In doing your Duty in the Labours of your Calling, humbly depend upon God's Fatherly Care for a Comfortable Subsistence for thy self and Family, and Compose thy Mind in all Conditions of Life to a quiet and steady Dependance on the Divine Providence, being anxiously Careful for nothing, but casting all your Care upon him that Careth for you.

8. Heedfully observe all the Passages of Divine Providence daily, both towards thy self and others; and those Providential Dispensations which thou canst not thoroughly Understand, awfully Admire.

9. In all Places and in all Companies, remember the Presence of God, and walk continually as under the View of his All-seeing and Observing Eye. Often consider that God is every where Present, and then you will study to be every where Holy.

10. Walk every day with an high Esteem of the preciousness, swiftness and irrecoverableness of your Time, and resolve to spend it in Nothing which you dare not Pray for a Blessing upon, in nothing which you know must be Repented of before you Die, in nothing which you would not be found doing, if Death should surprize you in the doing of it.

11. Look every Day to the faithful Discharge of the respective Duties of your several Relations, as Husbands and Wives, Parents and Children, Masters and Servants, and remember that much of the Life and Power of Religion, consists in the Conscientious Practice of Relative Duties.

12. In the Evening retire, and take a View of your Actions the Day past; Examine what good you have either done or received, and bewail it as a Day lost, in which you have not either Profited others, or Advantaged your self.

CHAP. IV. Of Glorifying God in our Natural Actions, viz. in our Eating, Drinking and Sleeping.

IT is the Advice of the Holy Apostle, 1 Cor. 10. 31. *That whether we Eat or Drink, or whatever we do, to do all to the Glory of God;* plainly implying, that a Christian ought to perform his Natural Actions to spiritual Purposes, and whilst he is feeding his Body, must have an Eye at his Serving of God; Eating and Drinking to the satisfying of our Natures, and not to the gratifying of our Lusts. Our lawful Comforts without Watchfulness become our greatest Snares: The first

first Sin that ever was committed, entred the World by Eating. Our first Parents pleased their Appetites to their Ruin, which ought to make their Posterity afraid of all sinful Excesses: to prevent which, let the following Rules be remembred and observed:

1. Raise not any perplexing Scruples about what you are to Eat and Drink, to no purpose, but only to your own Vexation. Remember, Christ has taken away that Distinction of Meats, (Clean and Unclean) which was of old amongst the Jews, and has given us a liberty of feeding upon all the good Creatures of God with Temperance and Sobriety, 1 Tim. 4. 4. *Every Creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with Thanksgiving*: Which hints a second Rule.

2. Look that your Meat and Drink be blest and sanctified to you by Prayer and Thanksgiving: Sit not down to your Food as a Beast to his Fodder, without taking any Notice of the Hand that provides it for you. Our Meat doth not Nourish us by its own Power, but by Divine Appointment; and therefore our Blessed Saviour, tho' he was Lord of the Creatures, yet did not sit down to feed on them before he lookt up to Heaven for a Blessing upon them, St. Mark 6. 41. Remember that the Creatures on your Table are God's Creatures, and if you Convert them to your own Use without asking God's Leave, you are bold Usurpers.

3. Eat and Drink as in the Presence and View of God: We are most apt to forget God at our Meals, feeding our selves without fear. Now the Remembrance of God's Eye upon us will Remedy this: It is a memorable Expression which you have in Exod. 18. v. 12. *And Aaron and all the Elders of Israel came to eat Bread with Moses Father-in-law before God*: Where Observe, (1.) The Greatness of their Courtesie. (2.) The Graciousness of their Carriage. Their Courtesie was great; tho' Jethro was a Stranger, and no Israelite, yet the Elders of Israel honoured him with their Company; and their Carriage was gracious; *they came to eat Bread with him before God*; that is, *in gloriam Dei*, says one, to the Honour and Glory of God: They received their Sustenance as in God's sight, and caused their Provision to tend to God's Praise.

4. Remember that Reason, and not Appetite, is to be our Guide and Rule, both for the Quantity and Quality of our Meat and Drink: Not what Appetite likes best, but what Reason and Judgment tells you is best, ought to be received by you. Meat and Drink have destroyed more thousands, than ever Poyson did: because persons are not so fearful of these as they are of that. If the Brute Creatures at any time eat or drink to any Degree of Excess, it is to satisfy their Nature, not to gratify their Lusts. But what an Abominable Shame is it for Man, instead of being governed by Reason, to be inflaved by his lust; and to have his sensitive Appetite command his Rational Faculty?

5. Take heed of making thy Table a Snare, either to thy self or others.

others. This is done two ways: (1.) When our Meals are Incentives to Sin, and our Food is made Fewel for our Lusts; the Flesh is an Enemy too strong for us when we take away its Armour, and fight against it; but much more so, when we our selves put a Weapon into its hand, and provide it Ammunition to fight against us, *Rom. 12. ult. Make no provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof.* (2.) We make our Table a Snare, when by our Importunities we urge others to eat and drink more than they desire, or their Natures will well bear. It is unquestionably lawful for a Man sometimes to exceed in his Provision for his Friends, but lawful at no time to exceed the Bounds of Sobriety and Moderation himself, or to solicit others so to do. The Royal Example of *Ahasuerus* an Heathen King, the Spirit of God has Recorded to the shame of many that call themselves Christians, *Esth. 1. v. 7, 8.* When he made a magnificent Feast for his Princes and Nobles, he commands that every man eat and drink according to his own pleasure, and that none be compell'd.

6. Let every one labour to understand, what is most conducive to his own Health, and let that be the ordinary measure of his Diet, both for Quantity, Quality and Time. It is every Man's Duty to observe the Temper of his own Body; and to understand his particular Constitution in order to the preservation of Life and Health; that a healthful Body may be assistant to a holy Soul in the Service of God.

7. Often consider with thy self, what a Sinning sin, what a Beastly sin, and what a Destroying sin, the sin of intemperance is. 'Tis an In-let to all Sin, and for that Reason perhaps is not particularly forbidden in any one of the Commandments, because it is contrary to them All; Drunkenness may be called a breach of every one of the Commandments, because it disposes men to break them All: What sin is it, that a Drunken man stands not ready to commit? Fornication, Murther, Adultery, Incest, what not? and how doth this Sin transform a man into a Beast, and make him the Shame and Reproach of Humane Nature? Of the two, it is much worse to be like a Beast than to be a Beast: The Beast is what God has made it, but the Drunkard is what Sin and the Devil has made him: Add to this, that the Intemperate man is his own Tormentor, yea his own Destroyer; as appears by the many Diseases and untimely Deaths which Serfeiting and Drunkenness daily bring upon men. For as Temperance and Sobriety is the Nurse and Preserver of Life and Health, so Excess in either is the occasion of Self-murther; 'tis like a lingering Poyson, which tho' it works slowly, yet it destroys surely. Consider lastly, That Intemperance is a sin which a man cannot presently Repent of, soon as he has committed it: A Drunken-man is no more fit to repent than a Dead man; and what Assurance has any man that when Drunkenness closes his Eyes over night, that he shall not open the

in Hell flames next Morning? How many thousands have closed their Eyes in a Drunken fit, and opened them in another World?

8. Think it neither unlawful nor indecent to intermingle innocent and harmless mirth with your Eating and Drinking; but always remember to keep within the Bounds of Modesty, Decency and Sobriety. It is certainly a melancholly Reflection, that the thing we call Society and Conversation, the Gentleman and the Christian Mirth and Religion, should be thought inconsistent; that men to fly Preciseness must run into Debauchery and Prophaneness. Cannot fowness and moroseness be banisht Conversation, but must Modesty and Sobriety be banisht too? Must our Entertainments of one another at our Tables administer either to Sin or to Sullenness? Surely it is possible to observe the Rules of Conversation better without running into either Extreme. A vertuous and wise man at his Table may let his Tongue loose in a harmless Urbanity, but at the same time he scorns to come within the Verge of a base Scuriity, *Eph. 4. 29. Let no filthy Communication proceed out of your Mouth, but that which is good to the use of Edifying.*

As touching Intemperance and Excess in Sleep, Necessity Cures most of you that are Poor of this Evil, and it may be happy for you that it doth so, for how many thousand Hours have some that are Rich to account for, which were spent in a sinful Excess of Sleep? and Oh, how earnestly will such Persons shortly wish for those Hours to spend over again which were thus Consumed!

1. Let Prudence direct you about the Measure of your Sleep, and Piety instruct you to mind the Ends of it, which are the repairing of Nature, the refreshing of the Spirits, the supporting of our frail Bodies, which continual Labour and Toil would soon weary and wear out, but now a moderate Degree of Sleep best serves these Ends, namely to fit us for Business, and enable us to Serve God by an Active Obedience.

2. Often Consider what a great Time-waster Sleep is, and that there is no part of your Time so totally lost as that which is Consumed in Sleep, for all that Time a Man's Reason lies idle and buried, all his Wildom and Knowledge is of no Use or Advantage to himself or his Neighbour.

3. Remember how very injurious Immoderate Sleep is, both to thy Body and Soul: To thy Body, in filling that full of Diseases, and making it a very Sink of Pernicious Humours: To thy Soul, by bringing a Stupifying Dulness on its Faculties, and thereby rendering it unfit for Holy Services.

4. Remember also the grand Importance of the Business of your Souls, which lies continually upon your Hands; and let the Consideration of the greatness of your Work, rouze and raise you from a Bed of Sloth. If you have a Journey to go or some extraordinary Business to do, you can rise Early at a particular time, why not then

every Day, when you have much greater Business to do for God and your Souls.

5. Remember that your Morning-hours are the Flower of your Time, and that early rising makes at once both the Body healthful and the Soul holy. The Morning is the best time for enjoying God and our selves, then are our Spirits fresh, and our Hearts free from Worldly Cares.

6. Believe your self certainly Accountable to God for the Time you spend in Sleep; this will make you with Holy Hooper, sparing of your Sleep; more sparing of your Diet, and most sparing of your Time.

CHAP. V. *Of Glorifying God in our Civil Employment, and Labours of our particular Callings.*

Almighty God has sent no Man into the World to be idle, but to serve him in the way of an honest and industrious Diligence: He that says, *Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy*, says also, *Six days shalt thou labour*, either with the Labour of the Mind, or of the Body, or with both. Riches and a great Estate will excuse none from labouring in some kind or other, in the Service of our Maker; for he that receives most Wages surely ought to do some Work.

1. Labour to Understand and be thoroughly sensible how much you are beholden to God for the Benefit of a Calling: Thousands are now Blessing God in Heaven for the Blessing of a Calling here on Earth, by which multitudes of Temptations were prevented; how many sins doth a Life of Idleness expose unto?

2. Be Diligent and Industrious in the way of thy Calling, and that from a Principle of Obedience to the Divine Command: He that says, *Be fervent in Prayer*, says also, *Be not slothful in Business*. An Idle Man has no Pattern or President either in Hell or Heaven: Not in Hell, for the Devils are diligent about their Deeds of darkness: Not in Heaven, for the Angels are continually employed, either in Beholding God's Beauty, or in Executing God's Commands.

3. If thou art called to the meanest and most laborious Calling, that of an Husbandman, murmur not at it, because it is Wearisom to the Flesh, but hie the Command of God, and in Obedience thereunto be diligent in thy place, and then thou glorifies God as truly when digging in thy Field, as the Minister in his Pulpit, or the Prince upon his Throne.

4. Be strictly Just and exactly Righteous in the way of thy Calling, and with a generate Dildain and Contempt abhor the getting of Riches by Unrighteousness: Cursed Gain is no Gain. How sad is it to be rich on Earth, and to roar in Hell for unrighteous Riches?

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He that cheats and over-reaches, he that tricks and defrauds his Neighbours, is as sure to go to Hell, without Repentance and Restitution, as the prophaneſt Swearer or Drunkard in a Town, 1 Cor. 6. 9. *Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God?*

5. Be very careful that thy Particular Calling as a private Person, do not incroach upon thy General Calling as a Christian: The World is a great devourer of precious Time, it robs the Soul of many an hour which should be spent in Communion with God, and in communing with our own Hearts. How many are so taken up with their Trade on Earth, that they forget to Converse with Heaven: Verily there is a holy part in every man's Time, which the daily Exercises of Religion call for, and which it is our daily Duty to keep inviolable from the Sacrilegious hands of an encroaching World.

6. Labour after an heavenly frame of Spirit in the Management of thy Earthly Business; and take heed that thy Worldly Employments do not blunt the edge of thy Spiritual Affections, but endeavour to keep thy Heart close with God, when thy Hand is employed in the Labours of thy Calling. A Faithful and Loving Husband, when he has been abroad all day in Varieties of Company, yet when he comes home at Night, he brings his Affections with him as entire to his Wife, as when he went forth in the Morning from her; yea, he is inwardly pleased that he is got from all other Company to enjoy hers: Thus doth a heavenly minded Christian, after he has spent some time amidst his worldly Business in the Labours of his Calling; he desires and endeavours to bring his whole heart to God with him, when at Night he returns into his presence to wait upon him; yea, he strives to keep his Heart with God all the day long, by often lifting it up to God, in holy Thoughts and pious Ejaculations, which are an Help rather than an Hindrance to Worldly Business.

7. Eye God in every Providence thou meetest with in thy Calling. Dost thou meet with any disappointment? see and be sensible of God's hand in it. All that are diligent are not thriving in this World: There are Mysteries of Providence, as well as Mysteries of Faith, which we can never fathom. Dost thou meet with a Blessing? Own God in all that good success thou findest in thy Employment with holy Jacob, Gen. 33. 11. *The Lord hath dealt graciously with me, and I have enough.* When God at any time sends thee in Profit, let it be thy care to send him back Praise: For nothing is so Acceptable to God as a Grateful Mind.

8. Watch daily against the Sin of thy Calling, as also against the Sin of thy Constitution, and whatever Temptations thou meetest with from either, cry mightily to Heaven for Power to resist them, knowing that thou never yieldest to a Temptation, but the Spirit withdraws in Tears, and the Devil goes away in Triumph.

9. Having used faithful Diligence in thy lawful Calling, perplex

not thy Thoughts about the Issue and Success of thy Endeavours, but labour to compose thy Mind in all Conditions of Life to a quiet and steady dependance on God's Providence, being anxiously careful for nothing. There is a threefold Care which the Scripture takes notice of: Namely, A Care of the Head, A Care of the Hand, and a Care of the Heart. A Care of the Head, and that is a Care of Providence and prudentia! Fore cast, this is commendable. A Care of the Hand, that is a Care of Diligence and Industry, this is profitable. But then there is the Care of the Heart, which is a Care of Diffidence and Distrust, a Care of Anxiety and Perturbation of Mind, this is culpable, and exceeding sinful. See *St. Matth. 6. 31, 32, 33, 34.*

10. Resolve in thy mind to be chearful and contented with thy Portion (little or much) which God as a Blessing upon thy Endeavours allots unto thee: Not content because thou canst not have it otherwise, but from an Approbation of Divine Appointment. Necessity was the Heathen Schoolmaster to teach Contentment, but Faith must be the Christian's, *Phil. 4. 11, 14. I have learnt, says the holy Apostle, (not at the Feet of Gamaliel, but in the School of Christ,) both how to be abased, and how to abound; how to be full, and how to be empty; yea I know in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.* How are some Christians Minds like Musical Instruments quite out of tune, with every Change of Weather. But it is an even Composedness of Mind, in all Conditions of Life, that glorifies God, and is advantageous to our selves, *1 Tim. 6. 16. Godliness with Content is great gain, Not Godliness with an Estate, but Godliness with Contentment.*

CHAP. VI. Of Glorifying God in our lawfull Recreations.

IT being impossible for the Mind of Man to be always intent upon Business, and for the Body to be exercised in continual Labours, the Wisdom of God has therefore adjudged some Diversion and Recreation, (the better to fit both Body and Mind for the Service of their Maker) to be both needful and expedient; such is the Constitution of our Bodies and the Complexion of our Minds, that neither of them can endure a constant Toyl without some Relaxation and delightful Diversion. As a Bow if always bent, will prove fluggish and unserviceable, in like manner will a Christian's Mind, if always intent upon the best things, the Arrow of Devotion will soon flag, and fly but slowly towards Heaven. A wise and good Man perhaps could wish that his Body needed no such Diversion, but finding his Body jade and tire, he is forced to give way to Reason, and let Religion chuse such Recreation as are healthful, short, recreative and proper, to refresh both Mind and Body; to which purpose the following Cautions may be necessary.

1. Look that your Recreations be lawful, and such as have nothing of Sin in them: We must not to Recreate our selves, do any thing which is dishonourable to God, or injurious to our Neighbour, as they do who droll upon things that are Sacred, and who make Backbiting Discourse their Recreation.

2. Look that your Recreation answer the End and Design of their first Institution; not to pass time away, which we ought above all things to Study to redeem and improve. Surely no Man needs to contrive how to drive away his Time, which flies so fast of it self, and is so impossible to recover. But the true End of Recreation is the refreshing of the Mind, and recreating of the Body, to make them both the fitter for the Service of God in the Duties of our general and particular Callings. Therefore,

3. Be careful that your Recreations be short and diverting, such as may fit you for Business, rather than rob you of your time. He that makes Recreation his Business, will think Business a Toyl. The End of Recreation is to fit us for Business, not to be it self a Business to us.

4. Take Care that Covetousness have nothing to do in your Recreations: Let your End be merely to Recreate your self, not to Win Money, for that will certainly bring you into a double Danger, the one of Covetousness, and a greedy desire of Winning, the other of Rage and Anger at thy bad Fortune, if thou hapnest to lose. Covetousness will occasion thy Cheating and Couzening, and Anger occasion thy Swearing and Cursing; and thus thou makest that which is lawful in it self, unlawful to thee, by making it an Occasion of sin to thee.

5. Let not your Recreations be Costly and Expensive: Some Persons have spent more in Gaming vainly than would Build and Endow an Hospital, and maintain many Families comfortably; little considering that they are only God's Stewards, and must be severely Accountable to him for every Inch of their Time, and every Penny in their Purse, which is consumed in Sin and Vanity.

6. Take heed that your Sports and Recreations be not cruel: We ought not to refresh our selves with Spectacles of cruelty, in seeing either Men or Beasts needlessly Tormenting each other; that enmity which is among the Creatures is certainly the Effect of our Sin. What a Heart then has that Man that can take Delight in seeing the dumb Creatures torment one another? Is it not enough for thee to behold the Antipathies which thy Sin has put into the Natures of the Creatures, but thou must barbarously make thy self Merry with their Miseries, who (in their kind) are far more serviceable to the Creator than thy self?

7. Remember (young Men) that God's Eye is in the midst of you, when in the midst of your Sports and Recreations, therefore be wise and moderate in the pursuit of them: Do all things as in God's sight, and you will do every thing to God's Glory, Respect ought to be had

in our Religious Recreations.

to God in all we do, not in our Vocations only, but in our Recreations also; and the Remembrance of God's all-seeing Eye upon us, will have an Universal Influence upon all our Actions.

8. Take an extraordinary Care that your Recreations do not engross too much of your Precious Time, which was given for Nobler Purposes. Oh how sadly do some Young Men addict themselves to a Life of Pleasure, Ease and Voluptuousness, unworthily wasting the Flower of their Youth, the Strength of their Body, the Vigour of their Minds, drowning in a brutish sensuality the Fair and Goodly Hopes of a Vertuous Education, together with the Honour of their Families, the Expectation of their Country, and the Improvement of their Parts: as if Almighty God had placed them on the Earth as *Leviathan* in the Sea, only to take their Sport and Past-time therein; such Persons being *Lovers of Pleasure more than Lovers of God*, are certainly in a most deplorable State.

9. But above all, take heed of making the Lord's-day your Day of Sports and Recreation: This is a Crime of a tremendous Guilt. Woe be to that Man which disturbs God's Holy Rest with his Unholy Sports. God's Holy Day calls for Holy Delights, *Isa. 58. 13. Not doing thy pleasure on my holy day.* Thou that art a Poor Man, and stealest time from thy Family for Unnecessary Recreations on the Week-day, this is Theft: But to steal time from thy Maker and Redeemer on his Day, is Sacrilege: of the two, it is better to Plough than to Play, to Dig than to Dance, upon the Lord's-day.

CHAP. VII. *Of Glorifying God in our Religious Duties.*

Almighty God being more Honoured or Dishonoured by us in our Religious Duties, than in all the Actions of our lives besides, it concerns us to be exactly Careful how we manage our Deportment in his Presence, when we Worship at his Footstool, and Bow before his Mercy-seat. If it be a Sin not to aim at the Glory of God when Eating and Drinking at our own Table, much more so when Eating and Drinking at his Table, when we are performing the most tremendous Acts and Exercises of Religion. How superstitiously Devout were the Old Heathens, in the Service of their dumb Idols! they thought nothing too good for their False Gods, for whom the worst was not bad enough, the Worshipper being better than the God he worshipped: when they were going to offer their Sacrifices, their Priests cried out in the Audience of the People, *Procul! Oh procul est prophani*; Depart all you that are Impure and Prophane from the Holy Sacrifices of the Gods. Oh were they so Choice and Chary in the Service of their dunghil Deities, and shall not we exercise a more extraordinary Dread and Caution in the Religious Service of

of the living and true God: Therefore to prevent sinful Miscarriages in holy Duties, the following Advices may be necessary:

1. Labour to entertain in thy Mind awful Apprehensions, and suitable Conceptions of the Majesty of that God whom thou art Addressing thy self unto: Conceive of him in thy Mind as a God of such incomprehensible Greatness and Majesty, of such transcendent Holiness and Purity, of such Sanctity and Severity, that he cannot behold Iniquity in any of his Worshippers, without the greatest Abhorrency and Detestation: And for that reason approach thou to him with a holy Fear, with an humble Reverence, and not without a trembling Veneration.

2. Set not about Religious Duties without previous Preparation: In every Work, whether Natural or Artificial, some Preparation is necessary to bring it to Perfection. In works of Nature the ground must be digg'd, and dress'd, and plough'd, and prepared before the Seed be cast into it. In Works of Art, the Musician must string and tune his Instrument, before he can play his Lesson melodiously: Surely then in Holy and Religious Duties (towards which our Hearts are naturally so backward and averse) it concerns us to exercise a preparatory Care, to bring our Hearts into, and keep them in such a holy, humble, joyful, thankful Frame and Posture, that God may have the Glory, and we the Comfort of all our religious Addresses to him, and Attendances upon him, in the way of his Ordinances.

3. Keep a watchful Eye upon thy Heart, when thou art engaged in any Religious Duty: Never are our Hearts so apt to wander as at such a time, and therefore they require a strong Guard. How very backward is the Heart to Duty! How naturally dead and dull in Duty! How soon weary of Duty! How many Pretences will our Hearts make, to cause us to omit Holy Performances, or to render us heedless and lifeless in them; therefore, as good *Nehemiah*, when building, did work and watch, watch and work, so must we in Duty, pray and watch, watch and pray.

4. Make Conscience of glorifying God in all Religious Duties, one as well as another: Partiality is hateful to God in the Duties of Religion, which have all a Divine Stamp upon them. Many complain of their deadness in Prayer, and dulness unto the Word, who never came to the Sacrament; Wonder not at it; God will not meet thee in one Ordinance if thou neglectest him in another. We must not limit and bind the Holy Spirit to this or that Duty, but wait upon him in all. Almighty God is pleased to communicate himself with great Variety to his Children, at one time in this Ordinance, at another time in that, on purpose to keep up the Esteem of all in our Hearts, and to engage us to attend upon all conscientiously in the whole Course of our Lives.

5. Look that in all thy Religious Duties thou serveest God with an holy

holy Alacrity, with a Spiritual Delight and Joy. Joy suits no Person so well as a Christian, and at no Season so well as when waiting upon God in Religious Duties: We have a Promise of it, *Isa. 12. v. 3. With Joy shall ye draw Water out of the Wells of Salvation:* And we have also a Promise made unto it, *Isa. 64. 5. Thou meetest him that rejoiceth, and worketh righteousness:* That is, thou acceptest him.

Look that thy End in attending upon Religious Duties, be the same with God's End in appointing of them: Namely, *First*, that by them we should pay our Homage to him as our Sovereign Lord: And, *Secondly*, That through them he may communicate his Spiritual Blessings into his Peoples Bosoms.

7. Above all take care that thou dost not blot thy Holy and Religious Duties by a wicked and unholy Life: If thou intendest to foul thy hands with Sins black work on the Week-day, it is in vain for thee to wash them with Prayer on the Lord's day. A little seeming Zeal at thy Devotion in the Church, will not gild over the Weeks Miscarriages in thy Shop, nor atone for thy Pride and Passion, for thy Deceit and Fraud, for thy Riot and Excess.

CHAP. VIII. Of Glorifying God in Publick Worship.

IT is confessed by all Persons who have any Sense of God and Religion upon their Minds, that they were made to serve and glorify their great Creator, by a constant Acknowledgment of his Sovereignty over them, and their continual Dependency upon him: Now much of the Honour of God and the Credit of Religion depends upon the due Performance of his Publick Worship; this glorifies God much more than any private Addresses from the Family or the Closet, both as it creates a greater Veneration and Esteem of God in the Minds of Men, and also because publick and solemn Adorations are the most illustrious Testimonies we can render to God of our Homage to him: Besides, how reasonable is it that we should own the God whom we serve in the Face of the World.

Not but that a Christian honour God highly, and serves him acceptably by his Family Duties and Closet-Devotions: But we do much more glorify him, by our publick Addresses. Then we honour God eminently, when we let others see conspicuously the high Esteem we have of his Excellencies, and cause the Voice of his Praise to be heard amongst Men. The Honour that is done to Persons amongst Men is not done in secret, but is always a publick thing. *Honour me before the Elders of my People,* said Saul to Samuel; in like manner we give unto the Lord the Honour due unto his Name, when others are Witnesses of the Esteem which we have of his Divine Perfections, by our Reverend Acknowledgment of him in his publick Worship.

Worship. To excite you therefore to a diligent and daily Attendance upon God in his Publick Worship, as you have Opportunity, Consider, (1.) That Publick Worship glorifies God most. (2.) He accepts it best.

1. Publick Worship glorifies God most, because hereby a Sense of God and Religion is best kept up and preserved in the World, which otherwise would be in danger of being lost. If the Publick Assemblies fail, Religion cannot long stand; the Worship of God in our Closets will not do this, because it is unseen. What we do alone, no Body sees, (nor is it intended that they should) and therefore that cannot induce others to the same way of glorifying God: But when Men see a Body of Christians assembled together in an humble manner, with pious Devotion and submissive Reverence, with bended Knees and Eyes lifted to Heaven, paying their solemn Acknowledgments to the Author of their Being, this strikes Men with a certain Awe, and supports the Belief both of God's Existence and Beneficence also in the Minds of Men: As for instance, when we see a great Multitude of poor People constantly waiting at the Gates of an House, we presently conclude that some great and good Man dwells there, whom the Poor wait upon: Thus doth the Publick Worship of pious Christians spread the Fame of God's extraordinary Goodness, far and near, whereas when few or none tread in the Courts of his House, (which were built to contain a Multitude of Worshippers, and to represent the inconceivable Greatness of that God who is therein worshipped) this very much damps the Sense of God and Religion in the World, and represents him after a poor and contemptible Fashion. Oh how unsuitable then is it, that the Worship of such a super-excellent and transcendent Being, as God is, should be confined to our Closets and private Houses, when it is much more suitable and agreeable to his Nature that we magnifie and praise him 'as openly and as publicly as possible we can, that so we may not seem to worship some little petty Deity, but the Almighty and Universal Lord of Heaven and Earth.

2. As Publick Worship glorifies God most, so he accepts it best, for there is nothing that Almighty God more delights in, than in the joint Prayers and Praises of his People, *Psal. 87. 2. The Lord loveth the Gates of Sion more than all the dwellings of Jacob:* No doubt the Prayers which good Men put up to Almighty God from under their private Roofs, are very acceptable to him; but if a Christian's single Voice in Prayer be so sweet, what is the Churches Choir, the joint Prayers of a Multitude of good Men in Consort altogether. A Father is glad to see any one of his Children at his House, and makes him welcom when he visits him, but when they meet altogether there, then is the Feast and splendid Entertainment. Verily the publick Prayers and Praises of God's Children are the Emblems of Heaven,

and a devout Soul, when joining in the publick Assemblies, looks upon himself as in the very Suburbs of Heaven, it being the nearest Approach that he can make to that glorified Society on this side Glory.

In order to your profitable Attendance upon God in his publick Worship, let the following Directions be observed by you :

1. Come always at the beginning of publick Worship, and tarry constantly till all is ended, neither coming late nor running away early, before the Blessing be giving, which many careless People rudely do, as if they were as glad to get out of God's House as out of a Prison. Those two pious and useful Men, whose Memories you of this place have such a deserved Veneration for, Mr. Rogers, sometimes your Minister, and Mr. Hildersham, the one in his Exposition of St. Peter, and the other in his Lectures on St. John, do give frequent Advice to their People, not only to come at the Beginning, but before the Beginning of publick Worship: "It becoming the People, say they, to wait for the Minister, rather than the Minister to stay for the People. Think not then that you are time enough at Church, if you get to the Sermon, tho' you miss the Prayers, for they prepare you for the Word, and sanctifie the Word unto you. It is not the way to profit by one Ordinance, to neglect another.

2. Enter the publick Assemblies awfully and reverently; presume not to come into the House of God, as you do into a Play-House or Dancing-School, laughing and toying, nor to go out of it as such; but labour for a lively and vigorous sense of God impressed upon your Minds, and to get your Hearts possess'd with the Consideration of the infinite Majesty and glorious Excellency of that God whom you are addressing your selves unto.

3. When present in the publick Assemblies, join uniformly with the Congregation in all the parts of God's Worship. It makes much for the Comeliness and Reverence of God's Worship, that all things be done in order; when the Congregation prays, hears, kneels, and sings together, as if the whole Congregation were but one Man.

4. Look that the Intention of your Mind, and the Reverence of your Body, do always accompany each other in the publick Worship of God; particularly in Prayer, look that your Soul ascend with every Petition that is put up at the Throne of Grace, and let the Posture of thy Body declare the Veneration of thy Soul. To that end, always kneel at Prayer, if with any conveniency you can. This Posture of Kneeling, and sometimes of Lying prostrate upon the Face in Prayer, was constantly used in the Jewish Church, and the Christian Church was never acquainted with any other Posture, except only betwixt Easter and Whitsuntide, when in Memory of Christ's Resurrection they were wont to stand. As for such amongst us who rudely

rudely sit at Prayer, it shews, that their Minds are not possess'd with an awful sense of that vast and infinite distance and disproportion that is betwixt God and them. Sitting no where appears in Scripture to have been used as a praying Posture: As for that one Text, 2 Sam. 7. v. 18. that *David sat before the Lord and said*; &c. it may as well be read, *David abode*, or *layed* before the Lord; and so is rendred, 1 Tim. 1. 22. Nor is it with me supposeable, that *David* would present his Supplications to Almighty God in such a saucy manner, as he would not suffer one of his own Subjects to present a Petition to himself. A Prince would not like an irreverent Behaviour from his Servant in his Bed-Chamber, where none besides himself is Witness to it; much less would he bear it in his Presence-Chamber, where he sits upon his Throne before a Multitude of his Subjects.

5. Therefore to compose the Frame of your Mind, and to regulate the Behaviour of your Body, whilst you are attending upon Almighty God in his publick Ordinances, often remember the several Eyes that are upon you, and taking notice of you: Namely, the All-seeing Eye of God, the observing Eye of Conscience, the vigilant Eye of the World, and the malignant Eye of Satan.

6. Never attend upon Almighty God in publick Duties, before you have waited upon him in your private Devotions. Enter your Closet before you enter into God's House, and there first, consider, and then pray. Consider with thy self the weight and importance of those Duties which thou art about to engage in: Consider the Worth and Value of an Opportunity for thy Soul, which thou art that day intrusted with; but especially reflect often upon the strictness of that Account which is to be given, for the long enjoyment of the plentiful means of Grace afforded to thee. Next bow thy Knees to Almighty God in Prayer, humbly implore his gracious Presence with thee, and Assistance of thee, in thy private Preparations, and in thy publick Administrations also. Remember, that as thou canst do nothing of thy self at the Ordinance without God's Assistance, so God will do nothing for thee by the Ordinance without thy Endeavours: The remembrance of the former will stir thee up to a more fervent Supplication for, and a more importunate Expectation of Help from Heaven: And the Consideration of the latter will excite our diligence and care both in our Preparation for, and Attendance upon, all the sacred and solemn Institutions of Almighty God.

Take therefore the Throne of Grace in thy way to hear the Word of Grace, and never go forth out of thine own House without Preparation and Prayer, to the House of God. And let such of you as plead to me want of Ability to express your desires to God, make use of the following Prayer, or some other composed to your hand, both in your Closet alone, and also in your Family, changing only the Person,

Person, according as you pray by your self alone, or together with
your Household.

A Prayer to be used on the Lord's-day Morning, or at any other
time before we go forth to Publick Worship.

OH Almighty and most Glorious Lord God : Who are greatly to be fear-
ed in the Assemblies of the Saints, and to be had in Reverence
of all them that are round about Thee. Altho' thou art infinitely exalted
above all the Prayers and Praises, above all the Adorations and Acknow-
ledgments of thy Creatures, yet such is thy astonishing Kindness and Com-
descension, as not only to indulge us a liberty of Access unto thee, but also
to account thy self highly honoured by us, when we come into thy presence
to celebrate thy Praises, and to renew our Acquaintance and Communion
with Thee, in the publick Duties and Exercises of thy Worship and Service.
In a humble sense of our Unworthiness, in a cheerful compliance with our
Duty, and in a thankful Acknowledgment of our Priviledge, we desire
to go forth this day to worship at thy Footstool, and to pay our Vows in
the great Congregation. God Almighty pardon to us all the Errours of
our Life past, and suffer them not to stand this day as a partition-wall
betwixt thy Majesty and our Souls, to hinder either the ascent of our
Prayers up to God, or the descent of thy Grace and Mercy upon us. Help
us seriously to consider, now our faces are towards thy House, whose Word
it is we are going forth to hear, whose Work it is we are about, and unto whom
we must all render a strict, and for ought we know a very suddain Ac-
count, for all Opportunities and Seasons of Grace we are entrusted with.
Let us hear that Word of thine which shall be either read or preached
this day unto us, and receive it also as a Message sent from Heaven unto
us, to guide us in the Way that leads thither : Oh let us love thy Precepts,
tremble at thy Threatnings, hope in thy Promises. Let us, and all that
shall joyn with us, hear thy Word without Prejudice, entertain thy Truth
without Partiality, and obey from the heart that Form of Doctrine which
shall be delivered to us.

Succeed with thy Blessing the Labours of all thy Ministers and Ambassa-
sadors this day ; especially be with thy Servant whom thou hast set as
a Watchman over this Place and People, that he may speak as the Oracle
of God, and deliver thy Message plainly and perswasively, that it may be-
come effectual for the Informing our Judgments, for the Renewing of our
Natures, for the Reforming of our Lives, and for the eternal Salvation of
every one of our Precious and Immortal Souls in the day of the Lord Je-
sus, who hath both directed and commanded us when we pray to say
Our Father, &c.

7. As soon as the Publick Ordinances are over, retire and with-
draw thy self from the Word, and be much in the present Medi-
tation of what thou hast heard. If thou art a single Person
call

all thy self to an Account, if thou hast a Family, call thy Household to give an Account of what they have heard that day; and endeavour thy self (according to thy Duty) to be their Remembrancers, by Repeating to them, either by the Strength of thy Memory, or by the Help of thy Pen, the chief Heads of Discourse, which were insisted upon, for the informing of their Judgment, and directing of their Practice. This was the pious Practice of your Forefathers; and if ever Religion recovers its decayed Strength, it must be by the Help and Encouragement of Family-Governours, who humbly Resolve, that whatever others do, they and theirs will serve the Lord.

8. Conclude and end the day of Publick Worship with Family-Prayer and a Psalm of Praise; bewailing the miscarriages of your Hearts in Holy Duties, imploring Forgiveness of the Iniquities of your holy things, and the Acceptation of your Sacrifice and Service in and through our Great High-Priest and Worthy Mediator; and if thy personal Abilities fail thee, make use of the following words to express thy desires to God by.

A Prayer to be used on the Lord's-day Evening, or at any other time, after we have Attended upon Almighty God in his Publick Worship.

Most Glorious and Holy Lord God! We thy most unworthy Servants humbly present our selves this Evening at the Footstool of thy Throne of Grace and Mercy, to offer up unto thy Majesty, the God of our Mercies, our Evening-Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving, for all that Abundant Grace and Goodness which we have experienced from thee in the whole Course of our Lives. We bless Thee for our Creation, that Thou madest us Reasonable Creatures, capable of knowing, serving and enjoying Thee our great Creator. We Magnifie Thee for our Preservation, by the same omnipotent Power which created us at first out of Nothing. Thou hast sustained us to this moment in Life and Being, in Health and Strength, when so many are either gone down to the Chambers of the Grave, or confined to Beds of languishing and weakness weary of their Beds and their Lives together. Oh our God! How does the Health and Ease of one day deserve the Thankfulness of our whole Lives! But above all, we adore Thee for thine inestimable Love in our Redemption by the Son of thy Love, the Holy Jesus: We thank Thee that he lived Exemplarily, that he died Meritoriously, that he arose again Victoriously, that he ascended into Heaven Triumphantly, and there intercedes Prevalently, at the right Hand of His Father and our Father, of His God and our God: For all the invaluable Fruits and Benefits of this our Dear Redeemer's Undertaking for us, We Laud thee, We Bless thee, We Magnifie thee, We Glorifie thee, We give Thanks unto thee, Holy Father, Heavenly King, Almighty and Everlasting God, most humbly beseeching thee, that as thou hast been pleased to call us to the Knowledge of thy

Son,

Son, and to believe in him, so thou wouldst encrease this Knowledge, and confirm this Faith in us evermore; that every one of us that nameth the Name of Christ may be careful to depart from all Iniquity, and may walk worthy of our Holy Profession, answering the Dignity and Obligation of our Christian Name. We bless thee also for the Mission and Descent of the Holy Ghost, to be a Witness of our Saviour's Exaltation, and to supply the Want of his Bodily Presence. We most earnestly beseech Almighty God, that every one of us may be quickened by his Renovation, that we may be acted by his Influences, and animated in our Devotions by his Assistances: Oh may all our good Purposes and pious Resolutions, which are the Effect of the Holy Spirit's Inspiration, be perpetually cherished in our Minds by him, which otherwise will fade and wither, will languish and die! We can never sufficiently, Oh Lord, Magnifie thy Mercy and Goodness, for the invaluable Gift of thy Gospel to us, which has revealed unto us the way of Salvation, and for the many Opportunities enjoyed by us of hearing the Word of thy Grace dispensed to us: Pardon to us our great Unthankfulness for the Continuance of thine Ordinances, and our greater Unfruitfulness under them. We confess with shame and sorrow we have been too careless and unattentive Hearers of thy Holy Word, remembering little, and praising less. How often have we turned our Backs upon thy Holy Table, as if we judged the Love of our dying Redeemer not worth remembering by us: Or if we have not wholly neglected that Sacred Ordinance, we have not so grown in the Graces and Comforts of thy Holy Spirit by it, as we might have done.

Forgive unto us the Sins of this Day; more especially Pardon to us the Iniquities of our Holy things, our unpreparedness for, our backwardness to, our deadness and dulness in the Performance of those high and holy Duties we have this day been engaging in; let our Persons and Performances find a gracious Acceptance with thee, in and through our worthy Mediator; for his sake receive us and ours into thy Protection this Night; may we lye down in thy fear, arise in thy favour, and our Rest be made refreshing to us, and we thereby be the better enabled to serve thee in our several Vocations and Callings the Day that is approaching. Extend thy Compassions to the whole World, pity the deplorable Ruins of Mankind, send forth the Light of thy Gospel into the dark Corners of the Earth that perish for want of Vision: Especially remember thy Church, wheresoever dispersed, or however distressed; be a perpetual Protection and Defence to that part of thy Church which thine own right hand has planted, and hitherto so miraculously preserved in these Nations in which we belong. We thank thee for all the wonderful Appearances of thy Power and Goodness toward us; and we beg of God to establish us upon such Foundations of Righteousness and Peace, that it may never more be in the Power of our restless Adversaries to disturb us.

God Almighty guide and guard, bless and protect thine Anointed Ser-
vant, our Sovereign Lady Queen Ann, let her Days on Earth be like
Days of Heaven, many and happy; and after a long and religi-
ous Reign, upon a peaceable and undisturbed Throne, may God Crown her
with the Rewards of a Glorious and Blessed Immortality.
Bless her and us in all her Royal Relations, with all the Nobility, the
Judges, Magistrates, Gentry and Commonalty of this Land; and grant
in all Wisdom and Grace to Fear God, to Honour the Queen, and Love
another.

But for the sake of all, Bless all those that administer unto thee in
thy Things, and let all the Governours and Pastors of thy Church fur-
ther the Edification of it by Soundness of Doctrine and Holiness of Life;
especially Bless the Ministry of thy Servant in this Town, and make
successful for the Conversion, Edification and Salvation of all that hear
of it.

Remember all the Sons and Daughters of Sorrow and Affliction, and
pardon thy Mercies suitably to their various Necessities: Do good to all
thy Friends, Relations and Acquaintance, Pardon and forgive our En-
emies; and do more abundantly for us, ours, and all thine, above what
we are able to ask or worthy to receive, for Christ's sake, in whose
Name and Words we further call upon thee:
Our Father, &c.

An HYMN, or Psalm of Praise for the Lord's day.

THIS is the Day, the Lord's own day,
A Day of Holy Rest,
Oh Teach our Souls to Rest from Sin,
That Rest will please thee best.
This is the Day, thy Day, Oh Lord!
On which thou didst Arise
For Sinners, having made thy self
A Sinless Sacrifice.
Thou, thou alone Redeemed hast
Our Souls from deadly Thrall,
With no less Price than Precious Blood,
The Purchase of us all.

Hadst thou not dy'd, we had not liv'd,
But dy'd Eternally;
We'll live to him that dy'd for us,
And Praise his Name on high.
Thou Dy'dst indeed, but Rose again,
And didst Ascend on high,
That we poor Sinners, lost and dead,
Might live Eternally.

Thy

Thy Blood was shed instead of ours,
 Thy Soul our Guilt did bear,
 Thou took'st our sins, gave us thy self,
 Thy Love's beyond compare.

Welcome and Dear unto my Soul
 Is thy most Holy Day,
 But what a Sabbath shall I keep
 With thee, my God, for ay !
 I Come, I Wait, I Hear, I Pray,
 Thy Footsteps, Lord, I trace ;
 I joy to think this is the way
 To see my Saviour's Face.
 These are my Preparation-days,
 And when my Soul is Drest,
 These Sabbaths shall deliver me
 To mine Eternal Rest.

CHAP. IX. Of Glorifying God in Family-Worship.

MAN's chief Prerogative and Dignity, which he hath to God of, is this, that he is the only Creature in the Visible World made to Worship and Enjoy his great Creator. All the Creatures are Servants, but Man is only a Priest to God ; they Obey their Maker, he only Worships him : This Worship under the Law was limited to a particular place, to wit, The Tabernacle and the Temple ; the Tabernacle was an ambulatory Temple, and the Temple was a standing Tabernacle : Into which they of old were required to repair ; and where Almighty God promised to accept their Sacrifices. But under the Gospel, Almighty God has declared that it is his Will that Men pray every where, lifting up pure hands, without Wrath or Doubting. So then, a Christian's private House is his Chappel of Ease, in which Almighty God allows him the liberty, and enjoins him the Duty of Worshipping with his Household : And accordingly we find that Religious Householders have in all Ages Constantly and Conscientiously performed this Duty. Devout *Cornelius*, his Family Religion stands upon Record, *Acts* 10. 2. He feared God with all his Heart ; that is, he Revered and Worshipp'd him : It is added, he gave much Alms to the People, and prayed to God always. Surely that was so Charitable at his door to refresh the pinched Bowels of his poor Neighbours, could not be so cruel to his Relations within his House, as to Lock up his Religion in a Closet from the World.

To Convince you of the Equity and Reasonableness of this Duty of Worshipping God daily, in and with your Families, Consider,

1. The Right which Almighty God has to your Family-Worship, by virtue of that Relation which he stands in to your Families. He is the Founder of your Families, the continual Preserver of them, and a daily Benefactor to them; the very Being of your Families, as such, is from the Lord: He builds the House, he setteth the Solitary in Families. He has founded this Domestic Society, Ultimately for his own Glory, and Subordinately for our good and Comfort. Your Families then are God's by a Right of Creation, and by a Right of Conversation also. He made them, and he sustains them: We and ours live upon his Bounty, and are maintained at his Cost; tis his Flax and his Wool which we daily wear, and he giveth us richly all things to enjoy. Now if *the Ox knoweth his Owner, and the Ass his Master's Crib*, shall a Family which Almighty God doth hourly sustain and nourish, neglect to pay their Homage to Him, and own their Dependance on him? Consider,

2. The superadded Obligation you lie under to the performance of this Duty, both in point of Duty and in point of Interest.

In point of Duty; (1.) As you are intrusted by Almighty God with the care and charge of your Children and Servants also; for which reason every Parent and Master is constituted a Prophet, Priest and King, in and unto his Household. As a Prophet he is to teach them by Instruction and Example. As a Priest he is to offer up the daily Sacrifice of Prayer and Praise for them. And as a King he is to command his Children and Household after him to keep the way of the Lord.

In point of Interest also: (2.) Have you not many Family-Sins to confess, and many Family-Wants to supply? Now is there any that can pardon the one, or supply the other, besides God? If thy Children want Bread, canst thou put it into their Mouths before God puts it into thy Hand? If they want Grace, can any work it in their Hearts but the God of all Grace? In a word, Do you not daily receive many Family-Mercies from the Hand of Divine Bounty? And is it not reasonable, that they which eat of the same loaf, should join in the same Song of Praise to the Founder of it. When you awake in the Morning, and find none of your Family dead in their Beds, or buried in the Ruins of their Habitation, but all of you preserved from death and danger, and delivered from the power and malice of evil Spirits, and out of the hands of unreasonablen and wicked Men, is not this a mercy that deserves thy calling thy Family together jointly to offer up your thankful Acknowledgments to the God of your Mercies?

3. Consider, That the very Heathens at the great Day will arise up in Judgment and condemn all such Persons as live in the neglect of worshipping God in their Families. For even they had their *Dii Domestici*, then *Lares and Penates*, their

their Household Gods, as they called them, whom they Sacrificed Morning and Evening unto, that they might conciliate their Favour, and be successful in their Enterprizes. The Old Heathens were wont to say, *Now we have Sacrificed, let us go to Bed.* How many that call themselves Christians say, *Now we have Supped let us go to Bed!* Oh what shall we think of such Persons? Are they Men, or are they Swine? They are sunk not only below Heathens, but even as low as Brutes, who never look up to the hand that feeds them.

Now that your Family-Worship be performed in an Acceptable and Advantageous manner, let the following advices be observed by you.

1. Take care that Family-Worship be performed constantly, and seasonably; by Family-Worship, I mean especially Family prayer, Reading the Holy Scriptures, &c. Catechizing and Instructing Children and Servants in the Fundamental Principles of Christianity, and praising of God in Singing. All which Duties the Family-Governour is to take care, not only that they be performed *constantly*, but *seasonably*, at such times as are freest in regard of Interruption; particularly, the Morning is the fittest Season, when our Spirits are fresh and lively, and before a Throng of Worldly Business crowd in upon us: You will find it much better to go from Prayer to Business, than from Business to Prayer, in regard of the freedom of your Minds from distracting Thoughts. So when the Evening comes on, delay not the performance of your Duty to an unseasonable Hour. Some Masters call for the Cushion to go to Prayer when they are more fit for the Pillow and to go to Sleep. But supposing that this should not be thine own Case, thou art wakeful thy self, yet thou oughtest to consider the Condition of the poor Servants, who work hard in the day, and to take heed that thou dost not expose them to the Sin and Temptation of drowsy Praying.

2. Look upon it as thy Obligated Duty, to pray Morning and Evening in thy Family; many Masters pray neither Morning nor Night with their Household, some pray at Night only, and then so late that a Child is asleep in one corner, and a Servant in another, and the Master himself between sleeping and waking; can such hanging down our Heads, instead of lifting up our Hands, be accepted as an Evening Sacrifice? surely we cannot expect it. To convince you how reasonably Almighty God may expect from you a Morning as well as an Evening Sacrifice of Prayer and Praise, Consider, (1.) That under the Law Almighty God required thus much, namely, both Morning and Evening Sacrifice, which was called the continual Burnt-offering. (2.) That we have no reason to think or suppose that Almighty God expects less, but rather more Homage and spiritual Worship from us now, having freed us from the burthen

such Ceremonial Observances as they were obliged to. (3.) That the often repeated Commands of the Gospel, which require us to *pray always*, and to *pray without ceasing*, cannot reasonably be thought to signify less than praying as often as the *Jews* offered Sacrifice, which was Morning and Evening. And this may as properly be called a *praying continually*, as the Morning and Evening Sacrifices under the Law were called a *continual Burnt-Offering*: So that if you do not pray Morning and Evening, you must suppose that Almighty God will accept of less service under the Gospel, than he did under the Law.

3. Advice is this, Spend so much time in Family-Worship, and particularly in Prayer, that those that join with you may be affected, but not so much time as to be wearied with the Duty. My meaning plainly is, be neither too short, nor yet too tedious: To arise up from our Knees, before our Hearts are affected either with our own Sin, or with God's Mercies, is to come away from a Duty no better than we went to it: and such an overhasty brevity argues very little delight that we take in the Duty; but shews that we are very glad to get out of God's presence as soon as we can. And on the other hand, too much prolixity and length in Duty has its inconveniences, and makes the Duty burthensome, and Persons the more backward to the Performance of it. Let thy Prudence then so guide thee in the management of thy Duty, that God may have the Glory, thy self and others the Benefit of thy attendance on him in ho'y Duties

4. Labour to preserve Family-peace; - if you would acceptably perform Family-Prayers, agree together in Love, that your Prayers be not hindered. This is certain, that Religion, and the power of Holiness, can never thrive or prosper in that Family, where discord and contention dwells; you may as well hope to live together comfortably in an House on Fire, as pray together acceptably when your Spirits are inflamed with Passion, or embittered with Prejudice one against another; nay verily, the Body may as well thrive in a Fever, as such a Family grow in Grace. As the fire in the Bones must be quenched, and the Body brought to its natural temper and disposition before it can thrive and grow healthy, so these unkindly heats must be quenched in a Family, before Religion can thrive or prosper: That Family will be unsuccessful in praying, that is much squabbling and brawling, often contending with, and clashing against one another.

5. Take heed of setting up Family-Worship in opposition to Publick Worship, or to suffer the one to interfere with the other: We can say our Prayers (say some) in the Chimney-corner, what need we go to Church to do it? But at this rate, all sense of God and Religion will be utterly lost in the World; and is not this the Corruption of Saints and the Fellowship of Holy Christians, a Privi-

ledge worth thy prizing? How does the presence of Devout Souls sometimes fire and inflame our cold Spirits, and cause them to grow into greater Ardours and Transports of Zeal! Thus the Divine Herbert sweetly expresses it,

*Though Private Prayer be a brave Design,
Yet Publick hath more Promises, more Love, &c.
Leave there thy Six and Seven
To pray with most, for where most pray is Heaven.*

God allows you time both for Publick-Worship and Family-Duties, he expects the joint performance of both from you. Let Piety and Prudence so Guide and Direct you in the management of both, that God may be Glorified, and your Souls Improved by both.

6. Let not the sense of thine own weakness or want of Gifts and Parts, &c. discourage thee from the daily performance of this Duty of Praying in and with thy Family; but in Obedience to God be about it in the best manner thou art able; and he will pardon thy weakness, and accept thy sincerity. It is not Enlarged Parts and Gifts and Florid Expressions, that Almighty God looks at, but an Humble Penitent, Broken and Believing Heart: In Prayer it is not the quaint Note of the Nightingal, but the mournful Tone of the Dove, that finds the best acceptance. Study your Sins, your Wants and Mercies, and get a Sense of all these upon your Hearts, and you will be able in some measure to express your desires to Almighty God. But if after all, the want of suitable Expressions do discourage thee from Praying before others in thy Family, make use of some of those many good Books of Devotion which are amongst us; Or if you have none of them, and are so poor that you cannot purchase them, make use of the following Words to express your Family-Wants in to Almighty God, Morning and Evening.

A Family Prayer for the Morning.

O H Eternal, Ever-Glorious, Ever-Gracious and Merciful Lord our God! Thou fillest the Heavens with thy Glory, the Earth with thy Goodness, and all Places with the immensity of thy Presence. We praise Thee fill our Hearts with awful Apprehensions of thy Great and Glorious Majesty, that whenever we come before Thee, we may Sanctify thy Name in all our Religious Addresses to Thee.

We Holily Admire, and Humbly Adore thy Divine Goodness towards us, in this Invaluable Privilege of our Admission to the Throne of Grace (which our dear Redeemer has purchased for us,) by Faith, in whose Mediation it is that we offer up our Prayers and Supplications now unto Thee, beseeching Thee for his Satisfaction sake to pardon our Iniquities and for his Intercession sake to hear our Prayers.

It is, Oh Lord! the sincere desire of our Souls this Morning, to give glory to thy Name by a free Penitent Acknowledgment and Confession of Sin and Guilt, which has rendred us all justly Liable and Obnoxious to thy Wrath and Curse.

Particularly, We lament before God, the want of the Original Purity and Perfection of our Natures, the Loss of thy Divine Image which was stamp'd upon our Souls in their first Creation: Oh how have we by our Apostasy from God, forfeited his favour, and lost his likeness, being by nature Children of Wrath, because Children of Disobedience.

Help us also to lye low at thy foot in a Sorrowful sight and sense of the manifold Actual Transgressions and Provocations of our Lives.

Humble us greatly for all the Follies and Indecencies of our Childhood, the Vanities of our Youth, and the Sinfulness of our Riper Years: for our Sins of Ignorance and of Knowledge, of Weakness and of Wilfulness, of Omission and of Commission, against thy Law and against thy Gospel, against the motions of thy Holy Spirit, and the checks of our own Consciences. We lament and bewail them all in thy presence; they are our grief and our shame, and the burthen of our Souls: God Almighty pardon them unto us; blot them out of thy Book, bury them in our Saviour's grave, that they may never arise more either in this World to shame us, or in the World to come to condemn us.

And as we humbly implore thy Pardoning Mercy for the Errors of our life past, so we do importunately beg the Aids of thy Divine Grace to empower us against the Dominion of Sin for the time to come; let the Grace of God which has appeared to us in thy Gospel, Teach every one of us practically to deny all Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts, and to live Soberly, Righteously, and Godly in this present World. And God Almighty keep it in the purpose of our hearts for ever to continue faithful to him, that with full purpose of heart we may cleave unto the Lord, that continuing faithful to the Death, we may lay hold of the Crown of Life.

Prepare and fit us for thy whole providential Will and Pleasure. We pray thee Compose our Minds in all Conditions of Life, to a quiet and steady dependance on thy Good Providence, that we may be Solicitously careful for nothing, but in every Condition by Prayer and Supplication let us make our Requests known to God: Mind us of our Mortality, and let us never be forgetful of our latter end; help us practically to understand how frail we are, and let us wisely prepare for that great change of ours which will Translate every Soul of us into an Unchangeable and Everlasting State.

Extend thy Goodness and Compassion: to the whole World: Pity the deplorable Ruins of Mankind; think upon the dark Corners of the Earth, that perish for want of Vision; and where ever thou hast a Church planted, perpetually watch over it, and be a protection to it: Continue thy Loving-kindness to this Church and Nation to which we belong, pardon

our Sins, avert our Judgments, heal our Breaches, compose our Unreasonable Divisions: Bless our Governours, especially thy Servant on the Throne, let her Reign over us be long and prosperous. Bless all the Governours and Teachers of thy Church, particularly him and his Labourers who Administers to thee and us in holy things in this Congregation. Let all in an afflicted condition be had in Remembrance of God. Give them Patience under their Sufferings, Advantage by them, and thy good time a happy Issue and Deliverance out of them. Bless all our Relations, Friends and Acquaintance, Pardon and Forgive our Enemies and enable us to forgive them also.

And now, Oh Father! Accept we pray thee our thankful Returns for all the instances of thy Goodness towards us, particularly for our Creation, Preservation, and all the Blessings of this Life: But especially and above all for thy wonderful Love in the Redemption of Mankind by the Son of thy Love, the Holy Jesus: We bless thee for the means of Grace and for the hope of Glory. We thank thee for all the Comforts and Conveniencies of Life afforded to us, for the Good Hand of Providence over us this last Night, and for raising us up this Morning to see the light of another day. Stand charged with the particular care of every one of us, prosper the labour of our hands, and bless us in all our lawful Undertakings, preserve us from the Evil of Sin, and keep us in perpetual peace and safety, through Jesus Christ our Lord! In whose Name our Words we call on thee:

Our Father, &c.

A Family-Prayer for the Evening.

ETernally Glorious, and Incomprehensibly Great and Gracious Lord God! who art infinitely exalted above all the Prayers and Praises of Glorious Angels and Glorified Saints. yet such is the condescension of thy Grace and Goodness, as not only to invite us into thy presence, but also to Account thy self honoured by us when we come before Thee and render our Acquaintance and Communion with thee in the Duties and Exercise of thy Worship and Service.

We humbly pray, that none of our iniquities may divide or separate between God and us, but wheresoever we have offended, be Gracious to us in the pardon and forgiveness of it.

Pardon, Oh Lord, unto us, Original Guilt, the Hereditary Pollution and Universal Depravation of our Natures. Remember not against us the Follies of our Childhood, the Sins of our Youth, or the Provocations of our Ripen Years, but according to the multitude of thy tender Mercies in Christ Jesus, blot out our Transgressions. Wash us thoroughly from our Wickedness, and cleanse us from all our Sins; Create in us a clean Heart, Oh God! and renew a right Spirit within us; purge us with Hyssop and so shall we be clean, Oh wash us in the Blood of thy Immaculate

Immaculate Lamb, the Crucified Jesus, and so shall we be whiter than the Snow.

And God Almighty grant that we may never more return to the Love and Practice of our former Sins, but proclaim and prosecute an open and irreconcilable War against them, yea, enable us by thy Grace to die daily to them, and to live unto Righteousness and true Holiness, continually mortifying all our evil and corrupt Affections, and daily proceeding in all Vertues and Godliness of Living.

Guide us, we pray thee, through all the difficult passages of our Lives by the Conduct of thine unerring Providence, and in all condition of Life let thy Grace be abundantly sufficient for us: Leave us not one Moment to our selves, lest we become a prey to every Temptation: But carry us joyfully through all the Difficulties of Life, and Support us powerfully in and under the Agonies of Death.

Keep us ever mindful of our latter End, and from flattering our selves with the hope and expectation of a long continuance of time here in the World: But let it be our great Ambition and Desire not so much to live long, as to live well, to be useful and serviceable to Almighty God in our place and generation, knowing 'tis nothing but a useful and well spent Life, that can render our Death happy, and our Resurrection Glorious: And let Almighty God mercifully assist and succour us in our last moments: in the hour of Death, and in the day of Judgment, good Lord deliver us: Remember all thine all the World over, do good in thy good Pleasure unto Sion, build thou the Walls of Jerusalem, ruin the Kingdom of Sin, Satan, and Antichrist, enlarge the Borders of thy Son's Kingdom, and give the Heathen for his Inheritance, the utmost parts of the Earth for his Possession. Be favourable and Gracious to these Nations of England, Scotland, and Ireland: Humble us for all our provoking sins, avert our impending Judgments, prevent what we fear, remove what we feel, and in thy own time establish us upon such foundations of Righteousness and Peace, that it may never more be in the power of our restless Adversaries to disturb us.

Bless our Governours, and all that are in Authority over us, both in Church and State, especially thine anointed Servant on the Throne, Q. Ann, and grant that under the shadow of her Government, we may lead quiet and peaceable Lives in all Godliness and Honesty; remember all the Sons and Daughters of Sorrow and Affliction, especially any that are near unto us, lying under thy hand in bodily Sickness: sanctifie, we pray thee, all thy Fatherly Corrections to them, and grant that the Sense of their Weakness may add Strength to their Faith, and Seriousness to their Repentance; raise them up if it be thy Will, and give them Wisdom and Grace to lead the Residue of their lives in thy Fear, and to thy Glory; and prepare us for the like Adversities.

Finally, we bless and praise thy holy Name, for all thy Mercies vouchsafed to us, for the source and fountain of them all, the holy Jesus: For all

all the invaluable Fruits and Benefits of his Incarnation, Death, Resurrection and Ascension; for the present means of Grace, and the hopes of future Glory. We praise thee also for all Temporal Blessings, for the use of our Reason, for the preservation of our Health and Strength, for thy watchful Care and good Providence over us this day.

Pardon to us the Sins of this day, whether in thought, word, or deed, committed against thy divine Majesty: And take us this Night into thy Care and Protection, give us comfortable Rest and Repose, defend this Habitation and all about it, from Fire, from Storm and Tempest, and every sad Accident: Deliver us from the Power and Malice of Evil Spirits, and keep us out of the hands of Evil Men. And when we awake in the Morning, let us be still with thee, and let every one of us in our several vocations serve Thee faithfully and painfully to our dying hour. All which we humbly beg in the Name and Mediation of the infinitely Worthy Jesus, who in Compassion to our Infirmities has commanded us to say.

Our Father, &c.

An H Y M N, or Song of Praise for the Morning.

L O R D, for the Mercies of this Night,
 My humble Thanks I pay:
 And unto Thee, I dedicate
 The First-fruits of the day.
 My God was with me all this Night,
 And gave me sweet Repose;
 My God did Watch, even whilst I slept,
 Or I had never rose.
 How many groan'd and wisht for Sleep,
 Until they wisht for day:
 Weary both of their Bed and Life,
 Whilst I securely lay.
 Whilst I did sleep, all danger slept,
 No Thieves did me affright,
 Those Evening Wolves, those Beasts of Prey,
 Disturbers of the Night.
 No raging Flames, nor Storms did rend
 The House that I was in:
 I heard no dreadful Cries without,
 Nor doleful Groans within.
 What Terrors have I scaped this Night,
 Which have on others fell?
 My Body might have slept its last,
 My Soul have wak'd in Hell!
 Let this day praise Thee, Oh my God,

And

And so let all my Days,
And Oh let my Eternal Day
Be thy Eternal Praise.

An HYMN, or Sang of Praise for the Evening.

MY God, my only Help and Hope,
My strong and sure Defence,
For all the Mercies of this Day
I bless thy Providence.
Lord, in the Day thou wert about
The Paths wherein I tread,
Now in the Night when I lye down,
Be thou about my Bed!
This Day God was my Son and Shield,
My Keeper and my Guide,
His care was on my Frailty shewn,
His Mercies multiplied.
Minutes and Mercies multiplied
Have made up all this day,
Minutes came quick, but Mercies were
More swift and free than they.
New Time, new Favours, and new Joys,
Do a new Song require,
Till I shall praise thee as I would,
Accept my Heart's Desire.

Now for a Close of this Advice to Family-Governours, concerning their Performance of Family-Worship, I shall only subjoin this one Cautionary Direction: Take heed of resting in thy Family-Duties, and by no means think it sufficient to prove thee a Saint, and evidence thee a sincere Christian, because thou art frequent in Family-Duties. Alas! A Man may set up the Worship of God in his House, and yet not enthrone God in his Heart. The Duty it self is good, but the bare Performance of it will not demonstrate thee to be so; look therefore how thou daily walkest as well as how thou prayest. If thou meanest to foul thy hands with Sins black-work in the day, it is gross Hypocrisie to pretend to wash them by Prayer in the Morning: 'Tis sad to pretend to Religion in the House, and to practice Deceit and Fraud in the Shop. Oh how many begin with God by Prayer in the Morning, and keep the Devil Company in Sin all the Day after.

The neglect of Family-duties will certainly bespeak thee a bad Man; but the most constant performance of them without a Life suitable to them, will never prove thee a good Man.

CH A P. X. Of Glorifying God in secret Duties.

Great is the Condescension of Almighty God in holding Communion with his Church in their publick Assemblies, when with United Prayers and Supplications they make the solemnest Addresses to him: But Oh, how adorable is his condescending Love, in stooping so low as to maintain a holy Fellowship and sweet Communion with a single Christian in his Closet devotions. It is not enough that in Heaven, when we shall put on our Robes of Glory, that he will take us into his Royal Presence, and admit us there to the sight and enjoyment of his Face and Favour, but will he now, whilst we are clad with Rags of Mortality, and before our Grave Cloaths are thrown off, entertain us also as his Friends, and indulge us the liberty of giving him a Visit in the remotest corner of our House? Verily such astonishing Love and stupendious Condescension, is rather to be admired than expressed by us. Now there are several secret Duties incumbent upon Christians, which Almighty God upon our humble Application to him, will afford us the sweet Influences, the secret Aids and Assistances of his holy Spirit in the performance of: As namely,

1. Holy and devout Meditation, when the Soul retires from the World, and in a serious and solemn manner sets it self to think upon God, to contemplate his glorious Attributes, to ruminate upon his gracious Promises, to admire his wonderful Word and Works.

2. Serious Self-examination, by which we make a daily enquiry into the State of our Souls, and thereby arrive at a well-grounded Knowledge of the Safety of our State and Condition, by comparing the Frame of our Hearts and the Course of our Lives, with the holy Rule of God's Commandments, and observing their sincere Conformity thereunto.

3. Secret Prayer and Supplication, which ought to be performed constantly and seasonably twice a day. As soon as thou arisest out of thy Bed in the Morning, begin the day with God, and make a most hearty tender of your self to his Service and Glory, before you set about any worldly Business, and never think of putting off your Cloaths to lie down at Night, before you have commended your selves and all yours unto his merciful Protection. For your encouragement hereunto, you have the Practice and Example of our Blessed Saviour, whom you find early in the Morning Praying alone,

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St. Mark 1. 35. and late in the Evening, St. Mat. 14. 23. and that this was our Saviour's usual Practice, may be gathered from St. Luke 22. 39. compared with St. Luke 21. 27. Thus Christ sanctified this Duty by his own Example, and has by his Promise annexed a Gracious Reward to the faithful doing of it, St. Mat. 6. 6.

All this our Blessed Saviour did when he was here on Earth, and now that he is ascended up into Heaven, to what purpose is he appointed our Intercessor there, if we send up no Prayers to him to be presented by him to the Father.

Besides this, the Sense of our daily Wants, one would think should sufficiently excite us to this Duty, we standing in continual need of God; or if we could be supposed to want nothing, yet the sense we have, that we hold all we call ours by the meer Mercy of God, should move us to acknowledge him, and to pay our Homage and Adorations to him. Add to this, that there is no such way to make Almighty God intirely our Friend, as by commending ourselves in the Duty of Prayer to him, with a pious Trust in his Mercy, and an entire devoting of our selves to his Service and Glory. But Oh how inexpressible will be the Comfort of going to God as an Acquaintance, when we are going out of this World, if we can truly say as that devout Man, Dr. Preston did, a little before his Death, *I shall change my Place, but not my Company*; how joyfully may we hope and comfortably expect to go to God when we die, with whom we held a constant good Correspondence, and maintained a sweet Familiarity whilst we lived.

Let these Considerations briefly hinted to thy Thoughts, work in thee a pious Resolution to begin and end the day with God, this will antidote and fortifie thy Soul against the Contagion of Sin, and the Temptations of Sinners. Ecclesiastical History tells us, that when St. Origen fell into that great Sin of Offering Incense to an Idol-god, that Morning he went forth before he had performed his private Devotions. We are never safe either from sin or danger, but when under the over-shadowing Care and providential Wing of God, and Prayer is the way and means to engage God Almighty's care over us, and concern for us; by Prayer we fix our Minds upon him, we lay open our Souls before him, we recommend our selves unto him, which gives our Minds the sweetest and most solid Satisfaction, that whatever Providences befall us, are certainly intended by an uttering Wisdom for our Good, and in order to our Happiness.

Now in order to your glorifying Almighty God in secret Duties, let the following directions be observed.

1. Be sure that thou art private in thy private Duties; let it be true secret Prayer, and not have its Name for nought: Remember our Saviour's Advice, St. Mat. 6. 6. *Enter into thy Closet when thou prayest*

prayest, and shut thy door; and be sure to shut it so close, that no Wind of Vain-glory may either get out or come in. Some Hypocrites pray in secret, but as they handle the Matter they are not secret in their Closets; like the Hen that goes into a private place to lay her Egg, but by her cackling tells all the House, both where she is, and what she is about; rather than be guilty of this Vanity, shut the door of thy Lips, as well as of thy Closet; not but that it is lawful to use the Voice in private Prayer, provided it be not for Ostentation, to be over-heard by others: Yea, and useful also, as it helps the Attention of the Mind, and prevents wandring Thoughts; and likewise quickens the Affections, by raising them up to an higher degree and pitch of Fervency. Christian Prudence therefore must direct thee what is best in this Case.

2. Look that thou art free and open with Almighty God in private Duties; come not to God in secret, and then conceal thy Secret from him; lay open thy very Heart, and spread all thy secret Sins before him, and be sure to hide nothing from him; if thou art not free to confess, never expect that God will be faithful to forgive. Prayer is called in Scripture a pouring forth of the Soul to God, because a gracious Person makes known all its wants and griefs to God, and does this with much freedom of Spirit: Verily, there is nothing that Almighty God resents more unkindly at his Peoples hands, than their Attempts to conceal either their secret Sins, or their secret Wants from him; when he stands ready so graciously to pardon the one, and so mercifully to supply the other.

3. Make use of the most proper and fitting Season for secret Prayer, and take heed that one Duty doth not interfere with another, either with Family-prayer or with Publick-worship; the Beauty of Christianity consists in the Harmony of a Christian Obedience, but the Devil takes a mighty pleasure in putting Persons upon setting the Ordinances of God at variance one against another; look also that thy Closet-devotion do not interfere with the Duties of thy particular Calling. God allows time for the Shop, as well as for the Closet; as thou art to shut thy Closet-doors to pray, so to open thy Shop-windows for work; and if we be not faithful in the one, we cannot expect his Presence in the other. Go then, Oh Christian, into thy Closet, before thou goest into thy Shop, or else thou art an Atheist; but when thou hast been with God there, attend with Faithfulness the Business of thy Calling, or else thou art an Hypocrite; he that says, *Be fervent in Prayer*, also says, *Be not slothful in Business*.

4. Take heed that your frequent performance of secret Duties do not degenerate into a lifeless Formality; what we do very frequently, we are prone to do very carelessly; it is exceeding hard

not

not to grow formal in those Duties which we are daily conversant in. Endeavour therefore with your utmost Care and Diligence to keep up the Fervour of your Affections in your daily approaches to God; and in order thereunto, I would advise you to pray often, rather than very long; for it is difficult to be long in our Prayers, and not to slacken our Affections. Our Blessed Saviour himself we find praying often, yea, and using the same words in Prayer, *St. Matth.* 26. 44.

5. Rest not upon it as an infallible Evidence of thy Sincerity, thou art found in the practice of secret Duties. 'Tis as possible for Hypocrisy to creep into the Closet, as for the Frogs to get into Pharaoh's Bed-chamber; a Man may perform secret Duties, and yet indulge himself in many secret Sins: But if thou delightest in searching Duties as well as secret, in the close Examination of thy Heart, in the impartial Trying of thy ways, in serious Meditation of the Threatnings of the Word, so as to deter thee from the practice of all known Sin, this will afford thee a good ground of Hope, that thy Heart is upright in God's Sight.

6. Let not Business divert thee, let not the Sense of thy own Weakness and want of Abilities discourage thee from the practice of secret Duties, especially from praying daily by thy self alone; confess all thy sins, and lay open all thy wants before Almighty God in the best manner that thou art able, and question not the acceptance of thy worthless Service for the sake of a worthy Mediator; and rather than the Sense of thine own Weakness and Want of Expression should tempt thee to neglect this Duty, make use of the following words.

A Morning Prayer for a private Person.

O H Eternal and Ever-blessed God! Thou art in thy self infinitely Glorious, in the Son of thy Love transcendently Gracious: In all Humility I bow at thy Foot, adoring thy Divine Majesty, by whose Power I was brought into the World, and by whose Providence I have been preserved to this moment. I acknowledge myself to have been estranged from thee, even from the Womb; for I brought a sinful Nature into the World with me, from whence all actual Transgressions have flown and proceeded, as impure Streams from a polluted Fountain. Oh Lord! Humble me, and that greatly, for my Original Guilt, for the Follies of my Childhood, for the Vanities and Impieties of my Youth, for the Transgressions and Provocations of my riper Years; give me a particular sight of them; work in my Soul an ingenuous and godly Sorrow for them; an impartial hatred and enmity against them: Accept of the Death and Sufferings

Sufferings of thy Son, as a full Satisfaction to thy Justice, for all that wrong I have done to the Holiness of thy Law, and enable me by Faith to repose the entire Trust and Confidence of my Soul on the Sufficiency of his Merits; and Oh let thy holy Spirit for the time to come, so direct, sanctifie and govern both my Heart and Life in the ways of thy Laws, and in the Works of thy Commandments, that in all my Thoughts, Words and Works, I may ever seek thy Honour and Glory; and may so order my Conversation aright, that at Death I may see the Salvation of God. Prepare me for a sick Bed, and fit me for a dying Hour; let not God be a Stranger, nor my Conscience a Terror to me when I come to die, but do thou mercifully assist and succour me in my last Moments: In the hour of Death, and in the day of Judgment, Good Lord deliver me, and conduct me safely to thine everlasting Kingdom. I bless thy Name, Oh Lord, for that good Providence of thine, which has brought me to the Light of another day, do thou so prevent me with thy Grace, so direct and assist me by thy holy and good Spirit, that I may not run this day into any Sin or Temptation; that I may not follow nor be led by any Worldly and Carnal Lusts, but be enabled in my place and station, to perform my Duty to my self and my Neighbour, with such Care, Fidelity and Cheerfulness, as may be acceptable both to God and Man. I humbly commend this Church and Nation to thy merciful Care and Protection. Let our Gracious Queen live in thy sight, and rule in thy fear, and let all her Subjects fear God, honour her Majesty, and love one another, Assist all thy Ministers in their hard and difficult Work, and follow their Endeavours with thy Blessing, particularly his who labours amongst us in thy Word and Doctrine. Pity all in an afflicted Condition; pardon their Sins, and supply their Wants. Remember all my Relations for good, requite the kindness of my Friends, pardon and forgive my Enemies, and enable me to forgive them also. These Mercies, with whatever else thou knowest to be needful for me and all Mankind, I humbly beg in the Name and Words of my Blessed Redeemer, saying as he has Taught me.

Our Father, &c.

An Evening Prayer for a private Person.

Most Holy and Ever-blessed Lord God! The Father of Mercies, the Fountain of Goodness, and the Author of all Grace. I desire again this Evening to bow before thy Mercy-Seat, to adore and praise thy Glorious Majesty, for thy Gracious Care and Providence over me the day past. Pardon unto me (most Merciful Father) I most humbly beseech thee, whatever I have committed or omitted this day, contrary to my Resolutions and Obligations. Pity my Weaknesses, and accept my sincere Endeavours to serve and glorifie Thee. Wherein I have been wont to slip, Lord, help

help me to be more Watchful, where I have been careless and negligent, help me use greater Diligence and Circumspection, help me more sensibly groan under this Body of sin which I carry about me, and which so interrupts me in thy Service, that when I would do good, evil is present with me. And Oh, that the sense of that Corruption which I find stirring in my Soul, may cause me more earnestly to implore the help of thy Blessed Spirit, which alone can enable me to Mortify all Evil and Corrupt Affections, to Deny all Ungodly and Worldly Lusts, and to Live Soberly, Righteously, and Godly in this present World. Raise up my Heart and my Affections above this World and the things below, and place them upon thyself and the things that are above: Oh, help me to Realize the things of Eternity and another World to my mind, and to believe them as certainly as if I saw them with my Bodily Eyes. Hear, Oh Lord, and Answer the Supplications and Prayers which have been put up unto Thee by any of Thine this day, on the behalf of this Church and Nation. Oh that Peace and Happiness, Truth and Justice, Religion and Piety, may be established amongst us, for all Generations: Secure the Person of thy Servant Queen Ann, from all Attempts and Violence, and let that hand be for ever withered, which shall be once stretched forth to hurt the Lord's Anointed; and let all that are in Authority under her execute Judgment and Justice impartially, to the Punishment of Wickedness and Vice, and to the Maintenance of thy True Religion and Godliness. Let all that Minister unto Thee in Holy Things, endeavour both by the Purity of their Doctrine and the Piety of their Lives, to win many to a Love of Holiness and Religion, that they may shine as Stars for ever and ever. Pity all those that are in a worse Condition than myself, supply their wants out of thy Abundance, and work in me a readiness of Disposition to administer to their necessities, according to my Ability. Accept my thankful returns to thy Majesty for all thy Mercies, for the Fountain of them all, the Holy Jesus, for all the invaluable Benefits of his Incarnation, Death and Passion, Resurrection, Ascension, and Intercession, for the Gift of thy Holy Spirit, for the Light of thy Glorious Gospel, for all the Comforts and Conveniencies of Life afforded to me, which many better than myself are deprived of, for thy watchful Care and good Hand of Providence over me this day. Receive me into thy Protection this Night, sanctify my Rest, and keep me from sinning against Thee upon my Bed, and let the natural Repose of my Body put me in mind, that e'er long I must sleep in the Bosom of the Grave, and awake no more till the Morning of the Resurrection, for which solemn Hour, good Lord prepare and fit me and all Mankind, by a renewed frame of Heart, and a religious course of Life, for thy Mercies sake in Christ Jesus, who has both directed and commanded me when I pray, to say,

Our Father, &c.

A short Hymn for the Evening.

NOW from the Altar of my Heart,
 Let Incense Flames arise;
 Assist me, Lord, to offer up
 My Evening Sacrifice.
 Lord, Watch and Ward, when I shall sleep,
 I humbly Thee implore;
 Thine Angels let my Guardians be,
 Both now and evermore.
 Into thy hands do I commit
 My Spirit, which is thy due;
 For why Thou hast created it,
 Yea, didst Redeem it too.
 Lord, if I live, let me be thine,
 Thine also if I die;
 Come Life, come Death, let Heaven be mine,
Amen, Amen, say I.

CHAP. XI. *Of Reading the Holy Scriptures.*

THE Holy Bible being a Letter wrote unto us by the Finger
 of God himself, what is our Reading of it, and daily Con-
 versing with it, but a Communing with the Almighty, and making
 an enquiry after that Revelation of his Will, which his Wisdom
 has been pleased to make unto us? How stupendous then is the
 Folly and Impiety of those, who either lay the Bible aside as a
 neglected Book, or else read it carelessly, irreverently, unattentively
 without an honest simplicity of Mind, to be guided, instructed
 and directed by it! To prevent the Sin and Danger of both which
 neglects it will be our Wisdom to resolve with our selves, to
 redeem some time every day, either Morning or Evening, or both
 to read it in our Closets, as well as in our Families, some part of
 God's Holy Word. And that we may read it with the greater
 Profit, resolve we to read the Bible through and in Order; which
 may be done once a Year by reading about three Chapters every
 day, two out of the Old Testament, and one out of the New. In
 the Discharge of which Duty the following Directions may be of
 Life and Advantage to us.

1. The first Preparative to our Reading the Holy Scripture should
 be Prayer; as the Scriptures were dictated at first by the Holy Spirit.

it, so do they still owe their Effects and Influences to the Spirit's Co-operation, he teacheth his People to Profit; the Things of the Spirit, the Apostle tells us, are Spiritually discerned, 1 Cor. 2. 14. And although the natural Man may well enough apprehend the Letter and Grammatical sense of the Scriptures, yet its Power and Energy, that perswasive force whereby it works upon Mens Hearts, this is peculiar to the Spirit, and therefore without his Aids, the Bible, whilst it lies open before us, may be as a Book that is Sealed to us. Whenever therefore thou takest the Bible into thy Hands, start up such Ejaculations as, these towards Heaven, and say, Lord, open thou mine Eyes that I may see the wondrous things of thy Law. Blessed art thou, O Lord, Teach me thy Statutes. Let thy good Word be a Light unto my Feet, and a Lamp unto my Paths. Order my Steps in thy Words, and let no Iniquity have Dominion over me. Give me Understanding that I may walk all my day by the Counsel of thy Word, and in the end of my days die in the Comfort of it. If you read the Word of God without Prayer, you must expect to read it without profit.

2. Second Qualification Preparatory to the reading of the Holy Scriptures, is Reverence. When we take the Bible into our Hands, we should do it with other Sentiments and Apprehensions than when we take a common Book, considering that to all that converse with it, 'tis either the Saviour of Life unto Life, or of Death unto Death, that is, in the regular and right use of it. 'Tis the Instrument of our Salvation, but upon our abuse of it, 'tis the Promoter of our Destruction. And accordingly we find good Men in all Ages have been wonderfully affected with the Holy Scriptures, and to the inward Reverence of their Minds have joined the outward Prostration of their Bodies; never reading the Bible but upon their Knees; to the great reproach and shame of our profaneness, who snatch up the Bible as we do a Play-Book, and Read it with as little Reverence and Regard: Yet with this difference, that we dismiss the one much sooner, and retain the Impressions of the other much longer. Now this proceeds in some from the want of that habitual Reverence which we should always have to the Word of God; and in others, from the want of actual Exciting of that inward Reverence when they go to Read: This is certain, that where there is no Reverence, there can be no Prospect of any genuine and lasting obedience.

3. A third Requisite to the reading of the Holy Scriptures with profit, is Sincerity; this is twofold, Namely, a Sincerity of the Understanding in order to Belief, and a Sincerity of the Will in order to Practice. We must come to the Word of God with a Preparation of Mind, to embrace indifferently whatever God reveals as an

Object of our Faith, and we must also direct our Reading to the proper end for which the Holy Scriptures were designed, namely the knowing God's Will in Order to the doing of it, *Psal. 111. 10. A good Understanding have all they that do his Commandments.*

4. Read the Scriptures with special Attention. 'Tis Folly and Lightness not to do so in the Reading of humane Authors, but 'tis Sinful and Dangerous not to do so in perusing of this Divine Book. What greater contempt can be shewn of a Man whom we hear speak, if we mind not at all what is spoken by him? This vile affront do all those put upon Almighty God, who hear or read his Word, but give it no Attention; the Vertue which God has put in to his Word consists not in the Letters and Syllables of it, which are no more Sacred than those of another Book, but 'tis the sense and meaning which is divinely inspired, and which can never be understood by Drowsie and Unattentive Readers.

5. Read the Word of God with a particular Application: This is the proper end of our Attention, let us therefore when we read look upon our selves as spoken to in what we Read; when we read our Saviour's Denunciation to the Jews, *Except ye repent, ye shall all perish Luke 13. 5.* We are to look upon it as spoken to our selves, and to conclude the indispenfible Necessity of our own Repentance. When we read that Black Catalogue of Crimes in *1 Cor. 6. 10.* which exclude Persons from the Kingdom of Heaven, we are to Believe that the same Crimes will as certainly shut Heaven Gates against us, as against those to whom that Epistle was immediately directed. So in all the Precepts of a Good Life, we are to think our selves as nearly and particularly concerned as if we had been Christ's Auditors on the Mount. In like manner when we read the Threatnings and Promises, we are either to Tremble, or Hope, according as we adhere to those sins against which the Threatnings are Dencounced, or practise those Duties to which the Promises are annexed.

6. Read the Word of God with a Resolution to practise what thou Readeft, otherwise all your Reading serves but to encrease your Guilt, and will aggravate your Condemnation. As Christianity is not a Speculative Science, but a Practicall Art of Holy Living, so the Bible was not given us meerly for a Theme of Speculation, but for a Rule of Life. Alas! what will it avail us that our Knowledge is right, if our Manners be crooked, and our Practise be bad? We shall wish another day we had studied the *Alcoran*, rather than the *Book of Life*. Read then the Holy Lives and Actions of God's Children, not as Matters of History only, but as Patterns of Imitation. When thou readeft of *Noah's* uprightness, of *Abraham's* faithfulness, of *Moses's* meekness, of *David's* devotion, of *Job's* patience, of *Josiah's* zeal; labour to be inwardly Indued with the like Vertues, and to be outwardly Adorned with the same

Graces.

Graces. Wo unto us if we read the Bible as Historians only, to furnish our selves with matter of Discourse, and not as Christians, to Regulate our Lives according to the Precepts and Examples contained in it: It will undoubtedly prove the saddest History that ever we read in all our Lives.

7. Let the Word thou Readeſt in the Morning be much upon thy Thoughts all the Day after; as thou haſt opportunity, if alone either walking or working, meditate upon what thou haſt read; thy Thoughts may be buſie, and yet thy Hands not be idle, thy heart may be in Heaven, whilſt thy Hand is at the Plough; how is it poſſible to profit by the Word we read, if we never think of it after we have read it? David tells us, that he had more understanding than his Teachers, becauſe the Law of God was his Study and Meditation all the day long, *Pſal. 119. 99.* If thou art in Company either with thy Children or Servants, Almighty God both directs thee and commands thee alſo to make his Word the Subject matter of thy Diſcourſe unto them: *Deut. 6. 6. Theſe Words which I Command thee this day ſhall be in thy Heart, and thou ſhalt Teach them diligently unto thy Children, and ſhalt Talk of them, when thou ſitteſt in thy houſe, and when thou walkeſt by the way, and when thou lyeſt down, and when thou riſeſt up.*

8. In Reading God's Word compare Scripture with Scripture: And uſe plain Scripture as a Key to unlock obſcure ones, for the Bible ſweetly Harmonizeth and Agreeeth with it ſelf; there are indeed ſome things hard to be underſtood, ſome knotty paſſages in Scripture, to tame our Pride, and to preſerve the Sacred Writings from Contempt; but the Truths neceſſary to Salvation are plain and of eaſie acceſs to the weakeſt underſtanding. In the Scriptures thoſe Waters of Life, (ſays pious Biſhop Hall) there are Shallows, and there are Depths: Shallows where the Limbs may wade, and Depths where the Elephants may ſwim. Let not the plainneſs of the Scriptures offend ſome, nor the obſcurity of the Scriptures diſcourage others. But,

9. If you meet with any difficulties in Scripture which over-match you, note them down, propound them to your Miniſters, and crave their help, in order to the right Underſtanding of them; you need not doubt of an eaſie Acceſs, and an hearty Welcome upon this Errand to your ſpiritual Guides; only be ſure that you come to Learn, and not to Caviſ; to have your Judgments informed, and your Conſciences ſatisfied; not to have any itch of Vain Curioſity gratified. Our Bleſſed Saviour tho' willing to ſatiſſie his Diſciples concerning his Doctrines, yet when they came to him with Nice and Curious Queſtions, he choſe rather to chaſtiſe that Humour by a Reproof, than to cheriſh it by a ſatiſfying Answer: See *Mat. 23. 13.* Lord, wilt thou at this time reſtore the Kingdom to Iſrael? he ſaid, It is not for you to know the Times and the Seaſons, &c.

10. If by frequent converse with the blessed Bible, you have got the Scriptures at your Tongue's end, take heed that you never furnish out a Jest in Scripture Attire, nor in a jocular humour make any light and irreverent Applications of Scripture Phrases and Sentences. Oh what an impious Liberty have some Men in this Age taken, to lay their Scenes of Ridiculous Mirth in the Bible, to Rally in the Sacred Dialect, and to play the Buffoons with the most serious Thing in the World! they bring forth Scripture indeed in Discourse, but it is as the *Philistins* brought forth *Sampson*, only to make them sport. These Men e'er long will find Almighty God in Earnest, tho' they be in Jest; and that he that has Magnified his WORD above all things, will not brook it, that any man should make it Vile and Contemptible, by rendering it the Theme of his giddy Mirth and prophane Drollery. It is Reported of our *Josiah*, K. *Edward 6th*. That when in his Council Chamber, a Paper that was called for happened to lie out of reach, the Person concerned to produce it, took a Bible that lay by, and standing upon it, he reacht down the Paper, the King observing what was done, frowned upon him, took the Bible into his hands, and Kist it, laying it up again: Of this Action of the King's let me make this Application, how much it concerns all Men not only to abstain themselves from every Action that looks like contempt of the Holy Scriptures, but also when they observe it in others, to discountenance the insolence, and both by Word and Action give Testimony of the Veneration they have for that holy Book which they see others despise.

CHAP. XII. Of Hearing the Word Preached.

OUR Blessed Saviour being Constituted and Appointed by his Father to be the Supreme Prophet and Teacher of his Church when here on Earth, he discharged this Office personally, going himself into all the Cities and Villages, Teaching and Preaching the Kingdom of God, *St. Mark 6*. Now he is Ascended into Heaven, he Teaches his Church Ministerially, by his Ministers and Ambassadors, whom he has enjoined in his Name, and by Authority derived from him to Teach his People to observe all things whatsoever he has commanded them, *St. Matth. 28. v. 20*. At the same time laying his people under a strict Injunction and Obligation also, to take heed that they hear, *Mat. 11. 15*, To take heed (*Mark. 4. 24*.) what they hear, and to take heed how they hear, *Luke 8. 18*. where observe, that as there is a Law injoining Hearing, so there is also a Rule to modify the Art of Hearing. And indeed if we consider the Majesty and Authority of the Person speaking to us in the Word, how deeply we are concerned in what we hear, the contrary Effects that the Word has upon

its hearers, the Paucity and Fewness of those whom the Word works savingly upon, and the Shortness and Uncertainty of the time which we have to hear the Word in, such Considerations cannot but excite our Care, and cause us to take heed how we hear.

Now that you may hear the Word Preached with the greatest profit, the following Directions may be of use and advantage to you.

1. Hear the Word of God *Preparedly*: Consider seriously with thyself whose Word it is that thou art going forth to hear; the Word of the Great and Holy God, by which thou must be Judged, *1 Thes. 2. 13.* Fix your End and Aim right in going forth to hear the Word, and that will have a special Influence upon your hearing; come not to the good Word of God with an evil frame of heart, either with pride, prejudice, or passion: But lay aside *all Filthiness, and Superfluity of Naughtiness, that you may receive with meekness the ingrafted Word which is able to save your Souls.* But especially take the Throne of Grace in your way to hear the Word of Grace. The Word works not as a Natural Agent by any Inherent Quality of its own, but as a Moral Instrument in God's Hand: Now as it is God that sets the Word on work, so it is Prayer that sets God on work. Say therefore with David, *Lord, open thou mine Eyes, that I may see the wondrous things of thy Law, make me to understand the way of thy Precepts.* And if thou wantest words to express thy desires upon this occasion, make use of the foregoing Prayer mentioned Page 26, 27, &c.

2. Hear the Word *Attentively*: Fix thy Mind upon, and apply thy Thoughts unto what is spoken; suffer not vain Thoughts, or drowsie Negligence, to hinder your Attention: For it shews a vile esteem that we have of the Word of God, when we give place ordinarily to wandering Thoughts, and a drowsie Eye in the hearing of it. 'Tis said of Lydia, *Acts 16. 14. That the Lord opened her heart, that she attended to the Word which was spoken of Paul:* Observe, First her Heart was opened, then her Ear; from whence gather, that the great reason of Persons not attending to the Ministry of the Word, is a defect in their Hearts? where the Heart is open, the Ear will not be shut. Oh what great Vanity of mind and Levity of Spirit does it argue in Men, to yield a far greater attention at the hearing of a News-Book, than when a Message from God is delivered to them, even a Message of Life or Death.

3. Hear the Word of God *Retentively*: Labour to remember and hold fast what thou hearest. To this the Apostle adviseth, *Heb. 2. 1. Let us give the more earnest heed unto the things which are spoken, lest at any time we should let them slip.* Many complain of

the Weakness of their Memory, they cannot remember the Word as they desire; let such take the following Advice, viz. Labour for a full and clear Understanding of the Matter delivered: The clearer Apprehension we have of Truths in our Understanding, the firmer Impression will they make upon our Memories: Ignorance is one of the greatest hindrances to Memory. Again, Labour to excite and quicken, and stir up and awaken your Affections of Desire and Delight, in and towards the Word of God. David says, *Psal. 119. I delight in thy Precepts, I will not forget thy Word.* We also find it true by common Observation, that passages in a Sermon is best Remembered by us which did most Affect us. But especially if you would Remember what you hear, be much in the present Meditation of the Word you have heard: The Word preached is compared to *Seed Sown*; now the Meditation is the *Harrow that covers this Seed*: This must be used as speedily as we can after we have been under the Ordinance, otherwise Satan the *Bird of Prey* which follows God's Plough, will *steal away the precious Seed out of our Hearts.*

4. Hear the good Word of God *Applyingly*: Make a particular and close Application of the Truths thou hearest to thy own Soul. It is observable that the Word of God is compared in Scripture to such things as do require a close and immediate Application; as to *Seed*, which brings forth no Increase as it lies in the Chamber, but when cast into the Furrows of the Field; to *Bread*, which nourishes not when standing upon the Table, but when applied to the Stomach; to *Rain*, which fructifies not when hanging in the Clouds but when drunk in by the thirsty Earth. This was the reason why St. Peter's Sermon met with such Success; why so many Thousand Souls were Converted by it. Every Hearer applied what was spoken to himself: *They said, Men and Brethren, what shall we do.* Acts 2. v. 37. Application is not only the Life of Preaching, but of Hearing also.

5. Hear the Word of God *Believingly*: All the want of Success which the Preaching of the Word meets with, proceeds from Unbelief: *Heb. 4. 2. The word Preached did not profit, not being mixed with Faith in them that heard it.* There is a mutual Relation betwixt Faith and the Word. No Faith without the Word; it comes by hearing; and no profiting by the Word without Faith. The Word fighteth boldly, and worketh miraculously under Faith's Banner; it is the *power of God unto Salvation* but only to them that *believe*. Faith in the Precept causeth Subjection; Faith in the Threatnings causeth Humiliation; Faith in the Promises worketh Consolation. Were the Threatnings and Promises which are daily Preached, duly Believed, what a mighty Influence would they have upon the Lives of Men! The Threatning

would affright us from Sin, and the Promises allure us to Duty.

6. Hear the Word of God *Meekly*: Take heed of Anger and Passion either against the Message or Messengers of God: Many Sinners are angry when the Word reproves them for their Sins, and threatens them for their Abominations, *2 Chron. 16. 10. Asa was wroth with the Prophet, who put him in Prison, and was in a rage with him.* If such Rage was found in a good and holy Man, whose Heart was perfect with the Lord his God, what Fury and Indignation may we conceive oft-times to boil in a wicked Man's Breast, when his sins are discovered, reprov'd, condemned and threatned by the Ministry of the Word? And therefore *St. James* gives Advice, *to receive with Meekness the ingrafted Word, Ch. 1. 21.* Consider, Oh Sinners! How unreasonable and unjust thy Anger and Displeasure is, when thy sins are reprov'd by the Ministry of the Word; either thou must be angry with the Messenger, or with him that sends the Message; to be angry with the Messenger, is unreasonable; for God will reprove him, if he neglect to reprove thee; thy Blood shall be required at his hands; and to be displeased with the Message is unjust: For wilt thou impudently break and violate the Law of God, and not endure to be told of thy Faults? If you say, that this preaching of the Terrors and Threatnings of the Law, is the ready way to drive Men out to despair, I reply, That 'tis not the Hearing, but the rejecting of Reproof, that lays Men open to Despair; *Peter* received our Saviour's Reproof, and repeated; *Judas* rejected Christ's Reproof, and that drives him to Despair, and next to the Halter; *he went and hanged himself, St. Matth. 27. 5.*

7. Above all, Hear the Word of God *Practically*. When the Minister's Duty is done, the Hearer's Work begins: He heareth a Sermon best, who practiseth it most. This practical Hearing of the Word, will evidence thee to be an understanding Hearer, *Psal. 119. ult. A good Understanding have all they that do thy Commandments.* It will Evidence thee to be a Retentive Hearer, because this practising is the end of our remembering; it will Evidence thee a Believing Hearer; who believed *Moses* his Word concerning the Plague of Hail, but they that made their Cattel flee out of the Field into their Houses? Who are they that believe the Threatnings of the Word, but such as upon the Denunciation of the Threatnings do *fly from the Wrath to come*? Oh Christian! Do not only hear and admire, but hear and amend; obey from the heart the Form of Doctrine delivered to thee, and then thou art blessed in thy Deed. To excite thee hereunto, consider, First, That this Practical hearing of the Word glorifies the Word, and God in the Word above all: To come to the word with-

out

But any desire or design to glorifie God by it, is the height of Prophaneness: To pretend, and not to do it, is the depth of Hypocrisie. The Apostle begs Prayer, *2 Thes. 3. 1. That the Word of the Lord may have a free Course, and be glorified.* When is God glorified, but when his Word is believed, entertained, Praised and obeyed? Consider also, That if thou art a Doer of God's Will, he will be a Doer of thine: He will make as much of thy Prayers as thou dost of his Commands; *John 9. 31. If any Man be a Worshipper of God, and doth his Will, him he heareth.* What a Priviledge is this, to have God's *Fiat* set to all we ask!

8. Be careful to take an Account of thy self after thou hast heard the Word preached. God has indued Man with a noble Faculty of Self-reflection, he has a power of calling himself to an account for the several Actions performed by him. Now when a Christian after hearing of the Word preached, is found in the Exercise of this Duty, frequently and faithfully interrogating his own Heart, *what he had heard, and how he has heard,* it is a good Evidence of his Sincerity; both because, First, It is a secret Duty: And, Secondly, A searching Duty. This is not the Hypocrite's Walk, who desires not to search himself, nor that the Word should search him: he is for taking all upon Trust, and nothing upon Trial. And having called thy self to an Account in secret, how thou hast heard the Word in Publick, what Benefit thou receivedst, and what Assistance thou enjoyedst; call likewise thy Family (if thou hast any under thy Charge) to give thee an Account what they have heard, and how they understand, endeavouring to inform their Judgments aright as to the Nature of those Divine Truths they have heard, and praying with them and for them, according to the Directions given before, *Chap. 8. Page 22.*

CHAP. XIII. *Concerning the Lord's Supper.*

THE Sacrament of the Lord's Supper being one of the most Tremendous Mysteries of the Christian Religion, and the highest Act and Exercise of Religious Worship; he must be unthankful to Christ, and unjust to himself, that does not warily attend his Soul in so sacred an Homage. Therefore, that I may assist you in a faithful Preparation for this Ordinance, and excite you to the frequent Participation of it, I shall briefly dispatch the following Severals.

1. I shall acquaint you with the Nature of this Ordinance.

2. Inform

2. Inform you of the Ends of its Institution.
3. Lay before you the Obligations which are upon you to frequent it.
4. Answer the several Pleas made by many for the Neglect of it.
5. What Preparation is necessary to fit you for it.
6. What Directions may be useful to assist you in it.
7. How we ought to manage our Deportment and Behaviour after it.

1. Concerning the Nature of this Ordinance: Know, that the Lord's Supper it is a Spiritual Feast, appointed for a solemn Remembrance of Christ's Death, and to be a Seal of that Covenant which God has made with us in Christ: The Use then of this Ordinance is twofold. (1.) To be a solemn Remembrance of the Person and Passion of our holy Lord, to excite us thankfully to call to mind all that Christ hath done and suffered for our good and in our stead, in order to the inflaming of our Affections with Love unto his Person, and our Wills with Resolution to obey his Precepts. (2.) 'Tis a Seal of the New Covenant, or Covenant of Grace, which God has made with us in Christ; in which Covenant he has assured us of Pardon of Sin, and Eternal Life, upon the Conditions of Faith and Repentance. Almighty God seals to us in the Sacraments, and assures us, that he for his part will make good his Promises; and we seal on our part to him, that he will endeavour (by his Grace enabling) to perform the Conditions. This is the Genuine Nature of the Lord's Supper.

2. Now as touching the Ends of this Institution, and the special Reasons and Purposes for which it was ordained by our Saviour, they are such as these: (1.) The renewing of that solemn Covenant with God, which we entered into at our Baptism; when by the Piety of our Parents, we were dedicated to the Lord, and took an Oath of Fidelity unto Christ the Captain of our Salvation, to become his faithful Soldiers and Servants unto our Lives end. Now because our Infirmities are many, and our Covenant-Breaches too frequent, that we may not want a merciful Opportunity to bewail our Backsliding, and to renew our Covenant, this Ordinance was appointed. (2.) Another end is to remember the Love of our dying Redeemer, in laying down his Life for us: St. Luke 22. 19. *This do in Remembrance of me.* In Remembrance of my bloody Sufferings, in Remembrance of my bitter Death and Passion. (3.) To seal up unto us the Pardon of our Sins, and the Assurance of Everlasting Life. St. Matth. 26. 28. *This is my Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the Remission of Sins.* Christ assures us of Pardon on his part, if we perform the Conditions of Faith and Repentance on our

our part. (4.) Another end of this Ordinance is to fortifie the Soul with Power to resist Sin, and to get the Victory over it, yea, to mortifie and subdue it: That our Souls being as Giants refreshed with this Spiritual Wine, all the Enemies of our Salvation may fall before us, and we may be more than Conquerors over them. (5.) The last, but not the least end of Christ in appointing this Ordinance, was for the uniting all the Professors of his holy Religion together in the strictest Bond of Love and Charity, 1 Cor. 10. 17. *We being many, are one Bread, and one Body; for we are all partakers of that one Bread.* That is, as many grains of Wheat united together, as one Mass or Lump do make one Loaf of Bread, so Christians, tho' many, by the Death of their Saviour, and by partaking of his Supper, are spiritually incorporated into one Mystical Body, and should labour to be of one Heart and of one Mind.

3. Next let us consider the Obligations which lye upon Christians to attend upon Christ in this Ordinance; now these are especially two, namely, an Obligation of Duty, and of Interest.

First, We lie under an Obligation to frequent this Ordinance, in Point of Duty and Obedience to our Saviour's Command, especially if we consider what kind of Command it is, namely, the Command of a Sovereign, the Command of a Saviour, the Command of a dying Saviour: 'Tis a Command of Love, a gracious Command, *Eat and Live.* 'Tis a pleasant, easie, and honourable Command: What more pleasant than a Feast; What more easie than to come to a Feast? What more honourable than to Feast with a King, yea, with the *King of Kings*? In a word, 'tis such a Command, the due Observation whereof will help us to keep the rest of God's Commandments better; it will be an efficacious means to make you do well. *Finally*, 'Tis a plain, positive, expresse Command, from which nothing can discharge us but a Countermand from Heaven, which we must never expect, or an Impossibility of doing it for want of Opportunity, which we cannot plead.

Secondly, We lie under a superadded Obligation to the practice of this Duty from a tie of Interest. For by a due Approach to our Lord's Table, our Baptismal Vow is renewed, our weak Faith strengthened, our languishing Love enflamed, our Desires after Christ enlarged; our Sorrow for Sin heightened, fresh Power against, and Victory over sin obtained, our present Joy and Comforts multiplied, and our future Hopes of Heaven advanced. Oh how unkind then are they to their Saviour; and also cruel to their own Souls, who live all their days in the neglect of this engaging, uniting, quickning, confirming Ordinance of the Lord's Supper! Whom all the melting Entreaties and passionate Importunities of the Ministers of Christ could never

ver prevail upon, to the practice of this most reasonable and most advantageous Duty.

3. But let us hear the several *Pleas* and Pretences which so many Thousands of Persons, tho' professing Christianity, do make for this notorious neglect of their dying Lord's Command.

1. *Plea*, or Excuse made by some, is the extraordinary Dread and Solemnity of the Ordinance; these put their Saviour off with a Complement, telling him, that the Priviledge is too great, the Dignity too high, and the Ordinance too solemn for them to approach unto.

Ans. This is a good Reason why you should approach the Ordinance with Preparation and Care, but no Argument at all why you should turn your back upon it: As if a King should invite and command you to pay *Attendance at Court* upon his Person, and you very gravely tell him, That it is too high an Honour for Persons of your Rank, you will therefore out of Reverence to his Person violate his Precepts, and at once affront his Authority and contemn his Kindness. Know then that the Reverence which our Saviour expects to his holy Institution, is a Reverence of Obedience: That Man has a due sense upon his Mind of the Solemnity of the Sacrament, who is careful to approach it with all the Humility and sense of Unworthiness which becomes polluted Dust and Ashes; but such a superstitious sort of Reverence as makes Men afraid of doing their Duty, is dishonouring to God, and detrimental to themselves.

2. *Plea*, Is that of Unworthiness: We are *unworthy* to come, and therefore *afraid* to come: *For he that eateth unworthily, eats his own Damnation*; and therefore he will be of the safest side, and prevent coming Unworthily, by keeping away, and not coming at all.

Ans. (1.) There is a two-fold Worthiness in reference to the Sacrament: A Worthiness of Merit, and a Worthiness of Meetness; if by being *worthy* you mean the former, a Worthiness of Merit, by which you deserve to be entertained at Christ's Table; in that Sense, not only the holiest Saint on Earth, but the highest Angel in Heaven, is unworthy of this Privilege: But then there is a Worthiness of Meetness, which imports such a fitness and preparation of Soul as the Gospel requires and Christ will accept. A Beggar is not worthy of your Alms, yet you would not account it humility but Pride in him to refuse your Alms (when entreated to accept them) upon pretence of being unworthy to them. The truth is, an humble Sense of our Unworthiness, is in God's Account our greatest Worthiness.

(2.) Whereas thou pleasest thy self that thou art on the safest side, by keeping away from the Ordinance, this is a manifest mistake

stake; because the Guilt and Danger of unworthy refusing, is certainly as great, or greater than the Danger of unworthy receiving: For not to come at all, is a bold Affront to the Authority of Christ, a mighty Contempt of the Love of Christ; 'tis the casting off the Profession of Christianity; 'tis a renouncing of the Communion of Saints, and quitting all Claim and Interest in the Covenant of Grace. Did they in the Gospel, who made light of Christ's Invitation to the *Marriage Supper*, escape any better than he that came without the *Wedding Garment*? Were they not both destroyed, they for their Disobedience, and he for his Disrespect?

2. *Plea.* Is that of Unfitness and Unpreparedness. My Conscience tells me, says the Sinner, that I am unfit to come to this Ordinance, and therefore I had better stay away.

Answer. (1.) Whose fault is it that thou art unfit? It must be either God's fault or thy own: Canst thou, darrest thou say 'tis God's fault, when he is willing both to assist and accept thee, when he offers thee his assisting Grace, but thou art not willing to accept it? But what is it that makes thee unfit? Is it not some Sin that you are not willing to part with? Does not Conscience tell you that you live a bad Life, that there are some sensual Lusts which you indulge, and are not willing to part with? This is that which makes you unfit to come, and afraid to come.

(2.) If you are unfit for this Ordinance, you are not fit to die; you pretend you must stay all the days of your Life, till you are prepared for the Sacrament; but will Death stay for you till you are prepared for that? When Death calls, appear you must at God's Tribunal, whether fit or not fit: Now what is it that prepares you for Death? Is it not the exercise of Repentance and a holy Life? This will fit you for the Sacrament, and without this you can never be fit for Heaven, nor hope to come there.

(3.) Speak sincerely, Did you ever go about to make your self fit? Didst thou ever spend a Day in thy Closet, in searching for, and finding out thy Sins, in confessing and bewailing of them, in resolving against them, in praying earnestly to God for the Aid of his Grace to enable you to mortify and subdue them? Did ever you repair to your Minister, and desire his Assistance in fitting you for the Ordinance? If not, (which is certainly the very Case of many) Good God! What horrid Hypocrisie is this, to offer it as a reasonable excuse, that thou art unfit, when thou didst never in thy whole Life once attempt or endeavour to make thy self fit! Unfit thou art not only for the Sacrament, but for every holy Duty also, unfit to pray, unfit to hear, and unfit thou wilt be for ever, without thy own Endeavours to make thy self fit: For Almighty God never wrought a Miracle to maintain Sloth. If thou

thou sayest, thou canst do nothing without God: I reply, That God will do nothing without thee: Use a faithful Endeavour to prepare thy self, and thy God will both assist thee and accept thee also; but it is great folly to think of excusing one Fault with another.

4. *Plea.* Alas! Say some, we are poor, ignorant Creatures, we were never Book-learnt, and therefore want the Knowledge which is requisite in a worthy Communicant.

Ans. (1.) If thou art wholly and grossly ignorant in the Fundamentals of Religion, thy Ignorance is dangerous and damnable, such as will shut thee out of Heaven, as well as debar thee from the Sacrament: But why dost thou rest contented with thy Ignorance? Why do you not repair to your spiritual Guides for private Instruction? Who would thank you for such an Opportunity of being serviceable to you? Will you chuse rather to carry your Ignorance to Hell with you, than make it known to such as are willing to relieve you against it?

But, (2.) It may be thou art not so ignorant as thou thinkest thy self; peradventure thou art mistaken in the measures and degrees of Knowledge which are requisite in a worthy Communicant: If thou hast a competent Knowledge of the Author, the Use and End of this Ordinance, it is sufficient, tho' thou art not able to dispute Controversial Points relating to it: If thou understandest the Author of the Ordinance to be Jesus Christ, the End of the Ordinance to be a Representation and Commemoration of his Death; that the *breaking of the Bread* represents the *breaking of his Body upon the Cross*, and the *pouring out of the Wine*, the *shedding of his Blood for thy Redemption*: if thou understandest the use of this Ordinance to be, for the renewing of thy Covenant with God which thou enteredst into at thy Baptism, to remember the Love of thy dying Saviour, to seal up unto thy Soul pardon of Sin, and to engage thee daily to die more and more unto Sin: To unite Christians together in the strictest Bonds of Love and Charity: If thou knowest all this, and endeavourest to act suitably thereunto, I dare assure thee, thou hast the Knowledge of a worthy Communicant. And if thou comest to the Sacrament with a desire to grow more and more in thy Knowledge and Obedience, Almighty God will mercifully Accept thee.

5. *Plea.* But I fear I am under the Power of an hard-Heart, I cannot mourn for Sin so much as I would, and weep over it so often as I ought; and what should a Person under the Power of an hard Heart do at this Ordinance.

Ans. If thou hast such a degree of Sorrow, as puts thee upon loathing and leaving off thy Sins; tho' thou canst not mourn for

for sin so much as others do, and as thou wouldst do, yet thou mayst be a true Penitent. Know, that another's degree of Sorrow, is not the Standard to measure thine by; all are not Sinners alike, and for that reason the sorrow of all Persons will not be alike; some Mens sins have been infamous and notorious, their Lives tainted with heinous Crimes; now their sins looking ghastly upon their Consciences, no wonder if they labour under such Agonies of Mind, such Horrors and Terrors of Conscience, and meet with such melting sorrows as others are strangers to, and unacquainted with. But perhaps God has blest thee with a pious Education, and his Restraining Grace has kept thee from those presumptuous Acts of sin which others have been guilty of, and consequently thou art a stranger to their violent Expressions of Grief and Sorrow; yet at the same time thou hast such a convincing sight of sin, as causes thee to hate it, and forsake it, and to loath thy self by reason of it: And tho' thou dost not mourn so much as thou wouldst, yet thou mournest that thou canst mourn no more. Now for thy comfort, that thou art not under the power of an hard Heart: Thou dost not wholly want the Grace of Repentance, but oughtest to come to this Ordinance for the encreasing of thy godly sorrow for sin, believing and expecting that the sight of a broken bleeding Saviour, will tend to the further breaking of thy Heart, and encreasing thy godly Sorrow for sin.

6. Pretended Excuse for not coming to the Sacrament, is the danger of Relapsing; I fear, say some, if I come, and afterwards fall into any known sin, that Almighty God will never pardon it, but my sin will be like the sin against the Holy Ghost, which shall never be forgiven, therefore we judge it safest to stay away.

Ans. It must be acknowledged, that we sin wilfully and deliberately, after we have been at this engaging Ordinance, is a Aggravation of sin, but not such as to render it unpardonable, but after our Fall we may be recovered by Repentance; *Because we have an Advocate with the Father, 1 John 2. 2.* Doubtless the Primitive Christians, who probably received the Lord's Supper every day, certainly every Lord's Day, did occasionally fall into many voluntary and deliberate Acts of Sin, but far be it from us to think that their Sins were unpardonable.

(2dly.) Know, that Almighty God, tho' he requires (after you have been at his holy Table) your utmost care to avoid Sin, and to shun Temptations, yet he doth not expect that you should live wholly free from Sin whilst you continue in this mortal state; he expects a Holy Life after the Sacrament, but not an Angelical Life; the Life of a Saint, but not the Life of an Angel; a Life of Purity, not a Life of Perfection; he expects we should be sincere, not that we should be sinless: Could Men live wholly free from sin after they have

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been at the Sacrament, then they need not to receive it more than once in their whole Lives; but the Sacrament being an appointed means to enable us more and more against Sin, and to get Victory over it, our Duty is, to have frequent recourse to it, notwithstanding our Relapses into Sin, after we have humbly implored pardon for them.

7. *Plea*, is this: I dare not come, because I labour under so many Fears and Doubts as to my own sincerity; had I an assurance of my State of Grace, I might venture to come; but I have heard, no man ought to come to this Ordinance that wants assurance.

Ans. There are two sorts of Doubtings; some that proceed from want of Faith, others which proceed from weakness of Faith. As to the former, some Men there are whose Consciences tell them, that they are either open Sinners, or close Hypocrites; these Men have great reason to doubt of their Condition, for it is certainly very bad and very dangerous, not one moment longer to be rested in. But then there are Doubtings which arise from weakness of Faith, *St. Mat. 14. 31. O thou of little Faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?* Now the Ordinance of the Lord's Supper is the proper Remedy for the Relief and Cure of these Doubtings; and the longer we keep from this Ordinance, the stronger will our fears grow, and the more will our doubts encrease: And whereas thou hast heard, that none should approach that want a full Assurance of their Grace; this is a great mistake; for the Sacrament being a Sealing Ordinance, is the great Means of procuring a full Assurance of Faith; which if a Man has already, there is no need of going to the Sacrament for it. No Man will go to the *Insuring Office* to secure an Estate which he has in his own Possession, and Apprehends to be out of the reach of danger.

8. *Excuse* is this: I see not (say some) much good gotten by this Ordinance; many that come to the Sacrament, lead as bad Lives as those that never come; and if it does them no good, we are sure it does them hurt, and they had better never come there.

Ans. (1.) Allowing what thou sayest to be a sad Truth, why shouldst thou draw such a wicked Conclusion from from it? Because some Men are choak'd with their Meat through their own Negligence, wilt thou therefore resolve never to eat more? Some Men eat and drink unworthily, and dishonour their Saviour; is this a sufficient Reason why thou shouldst disobey him? Surely thou art to walk by Rule, not by Example; and oughtest rather to eye thy Saviour's Command, than thy Neighbour's Miscarriage.

But (2dly.) How knowest thou, that such whom thou hast seen fall after the Sacrament, have not risen again by Repentance? I am sure we have great reason to believe, that Conscience is more quick in Reproving such Persons, than those that never Receive;

for the Remembrance of the Ordinance cannot but strike a man's mind at one time or other: There is more hope of a man that comes to this Ordinance, and does not live so well after it as he should, than of such a man who profanely keeps from it, and casts off all regard to God and Religion; for he certainly damns himself, to avoid the danger of Damnation: *He that eats and drinks unworthily, endangers his own Soul*; but he that to avoid this danger will not eat nor drink at all, doth he not run into into a greater danger?

9. *Plea, or Pretence*, is this: I would not have neglected this Ordinance so long (say some) but that I was not in Charity with my Neighbour, as I confess I ought to be; he wronged and abused me, and I being at odds with him, I durst not come.

Answer. If thy Neighbour has wronged thee, wilt thou wrong thy own Soul? Because he has hurt thee, wilt thou hurt thy self? The injury done to thee is his Sin; but thy bring in malice is thine own Sin, and thou must account for it.

But (2dly,) Inquire whether thine Anger against thy Neighbour be just or unjust; if thy Neighbour has done thee wrong, and persists in it without Repentance, thy Anger is just, if kept within due bounds, that it doth not Transport you to desires of Revenge; and displeased you may be with your Neighbour for a real Injury, and yet not be indisposed for the Sacrament. But if upon Examination you find your Anger was unjust, then you ought without delay to repent of it, and upon your Repentance to hasten to the *Lord's Supper*, where you will meet with sufficient Arguments for the cooling of the heats of your Passion, and for allaying the boilings of your Rage, beholding there such an Illustrious Instance of *Loving Enemies* and *Forgiving Injuries*, as the World was never acquainted with: So then, if thou hatest thy Brother in thy heart, and resolvedst to persist in that hatred, thou mayest tremble to come to the Sacrament, and thou oughtest to tremble every time thou sayest the *Lord's Prayer*; for therein thou dost directly pray against thy self. Labour then for a readiness of Mind to forgive thy Neighbour, and a willing desire to live quietly and peaceably with him, and thou mayest as safely come to the Sacrament as thou mayest say thy Prayers.

10. The next Excuse which some make, is a multitude and multiplicity of worldly Business: We are so incumbered with the World (say they) that we cannot find time to fit our selves as we ought for such a Solempnity.

Answer, (1.) Can you find no time to serve and glorifie that God who gives all your time? Or can you find time for every thing but your Soul?

(2.) Your Business is either necessary Business, or needless Business; If needless, why do you not throw it off? for such Business

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Business is your Sin: If it be necessary Business, that of your Place and Calling, this ought not to hinder you, for such Business is God's Service. Thou art serving thy God when industriously following thy Vocation.

(3.) The more necessary worldly Business thou hast upon thy hand, the greater reason thou hast to frequent this Ordinance? No man has more need of the Sacrament, than the man of Business; because no man's Soul is more in danger of being lost in a crowd of Worldly Business; for having so much of the World upon thy hand, there is just cause to fear lest the World get into the Throne of thy Heart, and that thy Riches become thy Ruin. In short, that Man that pleads Business for neglecting the Sacrament, doth plainly tell Almighty God, that he is not to be served but when the World will give leave.

11. The next Scruple made by some for not coming to the Lord's Table, is the Unworthiness of others: They are afraid some wicked men thrust themselves forward, and therefore they keep back.

Answer. (1.) True Humility will teach a Man to suspect the worst of himself, and to hope the best of others. But suppose it be as thou suspectest, can another man's Sin deprive thee of the Benefit and Comfort of the Ordinance? That when by the Grace of God and thy own Endeavours thou art fit, it should be in the power of a wicked man to make thee unfit?

Obj. But say some, *The presence of a wicked man pollutes the Ordinance?*

Answer. If so, he pollutes it to himself only, he cannot pollute it to thee who art no ways Accessary to his Sin.

But (2dly,) How art thou sure that the Person thou suspectest for wicked, is really such? Has he been bad formerly? yet what Assurance hast thou, that he has not sincerely repented, and is now come to the Sacrament with an honest desire to get power against his sins, which formerly got power over him? By his coming he makes a profession to do so; and how knowest thou that he is not sincere in what he professes? Oh but, say you, the Man will certainly return again to his former wickedness; next Week he'll be drunk again, and swear again. This is more than thou, or any man can tell; for thou heretofore the Temptations were too many, and his Lusts too strong for him, and carried him away against his Endeavours and Resolutions; but how knowest thou what strength of Grace the Lord may Communicate to him by this Ordinance? Charity should teach you to hope the best, and instead of Censuring your Neighbour, put you upon pitying their weakness, and upon praying for them also, that the Lord will keep them from future Backslidings.

12. And last Plea against Communicating, is this: Say some, We

do not like your way of Administring the Ordinance? We are for Christ's Ordinances in Christ's Order; but we neither like the Garment which you wear, nor the Form of Prayer which you use, nor the Gesture of Kneeling you prescribe, and therefore we cannot join with you.

Answer, (1.) As to your having Christ's Ordinances in Christ's Order, you have the Sacrament so with us, as to the Substance of the Ordinance, and all the Essential Requisites of it; but our Saviour never intended that you should observe all the Circumstances relating to that Ordinance which he observed: As for instance, he Celebrated the *Supper* in a borrowed Chamber, in an upper Room, in the Evening, only to Twelve Persons, and those Twelve Men, yea, Twelve Ministers, and in a Coat without a Seam. To keep thus strictly to Christ's Order, in the use of this Ordinance, I assure you is so far from being a Duty, that it will be your Sin.

But (2dly,) As to the Garment worn by us in the Administration, why should a matter of such indifferency discompose thy Thoughts at such a solemn time? Look you to your self, that you come cloathed with the *Wedding Garment of Repentance, Faith, Love, and Joy*, and if there be any Evil in Colours, in a White Garment more than a Black one, he that wears it, or the Authority that enjoins it, shall Answer for that, and not you.

(3dly,) As to our using a Form of Prayer in the Administration, know, that all the Reformed Churches throughout the World have done the like; the Church of Geneva not excepted; for the Spirituality of Prayer doth not consist in an extemporary Fluency of Words, but in the Intention of the Mind, and Devotion of the Soul; if we pray in Faith, with Humility, with Holy Fervency, with Humble Resignation, we certainly pray by the Spirit, tho' with a Form of Words before us; and on the other hand, if we pray without the forementioned Dispositions, our Prayers are formal and unacceptable, tho' we pray without a Form. Lastly, As to what is scrupled about Kneeling. (1.) It doth not clearly appear what Gesture our Saviour used, when he celebrated this Ordinance; the Scripture is very silent about it: from whence I infer, that had it been our Saviour's Mind we should follow his Example in this Circumstance, we should not have been left in the dark concerning it. (2.) Suppose it were sitting; this being but a Circumstance of the Action, we are no more obliged to follow it than the other Circumstances of Time, Place, Habit, &c. (3.) Let it be considered, how far the Church of England has protested against all Adoration of the Elements: So that they who suspect us Kneeling to the Bread and Wine, do shew themselves to be either grossly ignorant, or greatly malicious:

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But because this is the highest Ordinance, we attend upon Christ in, and we receive the greatest Benefits by the Ordinance we are capable of on this side Glory, even a Pardon Sealed from the King of Heaven, (which we would not receive in any other posture than upon our Knees from an Earthly Prince) and forasmuch as the Sacrament is delivered to us with Prayer, we judge it the most suitable Gesture for such a solemn Ordinance; and both in Obedience to Authority, and also from an Act of Choice, we use this Gesture, as a Token of profound Reverence to our most endearing Redeemer.

These are all the most considerable Pleas and Pretences which I have met with from Persons for the neglect of this Duty: If what has been here said tend to the satisfaction of any, and they are willing to address themselves to the practise of this long neglected Duty, I shall next inform them what Preparations is necessary to fit them for it.

5. And here know in General, that the best Preparation for the Sacrament, is a Holy Life, a daily walking before God in the Holy Path of his Commandments; in an Uniform Compliance with the Duties both of our General and Particular Callings, exercising your selves daily in keeping a Conscience void of Offence both towards God and towards all Men. In short, the habitual devotedness of the Soul to God, accompanied with a steady Resolution to continue stedfast in our Obedience to him all our days, is such a Divine Temper, as gives us an undoubted Right to the Ordinance, and is the best Qualification for it. But more particularly you are to understand, that besides our habitual Preparation by Repentance, and the constant Endeavours of a holy Life, we ought to set some time apart for Actual Preparation, tho' how much every Person ought to allot of his Time for that Work, cannot precisely be determined; some have more cause for it than others, have long neglected themselves and their Duty: Others have more Leisure and Freedom for it. No man ought to come to the Sacrament without due Care and Preparation; but God doth not expect so much time should be set apart for Solemn Preparation by a Poor Servant, as he does from a Rich Master.

Now a Christian's actual Preparation for this Ordinance, I take to consist in the practise of these five following Duties, Examination, Humiliation, Resolution, Meditation, Prayer and Supplication.

1. Examine thy self according to St. Paul's Advice, 1 Cor. 11. 28. For we stand too near our selves to see our Failings without great Observation: Take therefore the Candle of the Word into thy hand to search thy Heart, and examine thy Life by: Particularly examine, (1.) What Good there is in thee, what Know-

ledge to discern the Lord's Body, and to understand the Nature, Use and End of the Lord's Supper. What Faith to apply the Merits of his Death to thy own Soul. What Love to thy Saviour's Person, Precepts, Promises, People; to every one that has the Image of Christ upon him? What Repentance and Godly Sorrow dost thou find in thy Soul for Sin? What Care every day to mortify it, and to die daily more and more unto it? (2.) Examine what Evil is in thee, and has been done by thee? See, and be sensible of the Sinfulness of thy Nature, of the Sins of thy Heart and Life; of thy Omission of Good, and Commission of Evil; of thy Sins against God and thy Neighbour, in Heart, Word, or Deed: And tho' it be impossible upon thy utmost search to find out all, it will be a good Evidence of thy Sincerity, that thou art not willing to hide any.

2. Having by Examination found out thy Sins, fall down upon thy Knees in Confession and Humiliation before God; bewailing thy manifold Sins and Wickedness, which thou from time to time hast most grievously committed, by Thought, Word, and Deed, against his Divine Majesty. Labour earnestly to repent, and to be unfeignedly sorry for these thy misdoings; beg of God that the remembrance of Sin may be bitter to thy Soul, and the burthen of it be intolerable; plead with him to forgive thee all is past, and to give thee his Grace, that thou mayest ever hereafter serve and please him in newness of Life, to the Honour and Glory of his Holy Name. This done, before thou arisest from thy Knees.

3. Renew thy Resolution for a Holy Life: Vow to be more watchful, more careful and circumspect for the time to come; say with holy David, Psal. 119. 106. *I have sworn and will perform, that I will keep thy righteous Judgments.* And be sure when ye resolve against your Sins; that you resolve against all Temptations which lead to Sin; he that resolves against Drunkenness and Swearing, must resolve to avoid wicked Company, which draw him to that excess, and to pass by the Door where he is wont to be drawn in: And take heed of making any Resolutions in your own strength, but earnestly implore the Grace and Assistance of Almighty God: Oh be sensible that your own strength is small, your Enemy strong, your Temptations many, your Danger great. If ever you desire to bring your Resolutions for a better Life to perfection, look up to Heaven for Auxiliary Aid from thence, engage God's Strength, which will enable thee to do all things; so saith the Apostle, *Phil. 4. 13. I can do all things, &c.*

4. Apply thy self next to the Duty of Meditation, particularly Meditate on the Sufferings of thy Saviour: And to help and quicken the Meditations upon them, let me advise thee constantly to read over the History of them before a Sacrament, as you

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you find them Recorded in the two last Chapters (but one) of all the Evangelists: Meditate on his wonderful Abasement in his Incarnation, that the Creator of the World should become a Creature. Meditate on the Meanness and Poverty of his Life, and that will work in thee true Contentment of Mind in thy poor and low Condition: But above all, meditate on his unparallel'd Sufferings at his Death, his Patience under them, and his readiness to Pardon, and Pray for his Enemies and Murderers that were the occasion of them. This will at once inkindle thy hatred against Sin, inflame thy love to Christ, and inspire thee with a Spirit of Meekness towards thy greatest Enemies, in imitation of thy dear Saviour, who offered up his Blood to God on the behalf of them that shed it.

5. Set more than ordinary time apart before the Sacrament for Secret Prayer, earnestly pleading with God to make the Sacrament effectual, for the mortifying of thy Sins, for the strengthening of thy Grace, for the quickning of thy Desires, for the confirming of thy Resolutions; to make a Soul-nourishing Meal unto thee, and that thou may'st experience the strengthening, comforting, quickning, assisting, and accepting Presence of Christ, in and at the Ordinance; and that so thou mayest be able to sanctifie the Name of Christ, in the highest Act of Homage and Adoration to him, suitable Petitions for such an occasion you have many in that excellent Book called, *The Whole Duty of Man*; and in Bishop Patrick's *Christian Sacrifice*, with many more; in want of which, if thou canst not of thy self express thy own Desires, make use of the following Form of Words.

A Prayer before the Sacrament.

O Eternal and Ever Glorious God! Who dwellest in the highest Heavens, yet in the humblest and lowest Hearts: In a great sight of thy Infinite Majesty, and Adorable Excellencies, as also in a deep sense of my own wileness and unworthiness, I come unto Thee, Beseeching Thee, for the Passion of thy dear Son, to Accept of me a poor Prodigal, now returning to Thee, and Prostrating my self at thy Door, who am by Nature a Child of Wrath, by Practice a Child of Disobedience, and therefore liable and obnoxious to thine Everlasting Wrath: But thou of thine Infinite Goodness hast promised me thy Favour and Friendship in Christ, if at the call and invitation of thy Gospel, I will accept the Merit of his Death, and submit to the Authority of his Laws, and Proclaim and Prosecute an open and irreconcilable War against all known Sins, the Enemies of thy Glory, and the Disturbers of my Peace, O Lord, I heartily lament them, and from the bottom of my Soul, I Renounce them all, whether in thought, word or deed committed against thy Divine Majesty, faithfully Covenanting with thee for the time to come, not to allow my self in any known sin but to use all those means which I find prescribed by thee in thy Word, for

Of Receiving the Lord's Supper.

my spiritual Advantage, and for the Death and Destruction of all my Corruptions. Oh thou God and Father of Heaven, whose Thoughts of Mercy towards me have been from Everlasting, I dedicate my Self, Soul, Body and Spirit, to thy Service and Glory, as a small Return of Duty and Thankfulness for thy matchless Love, promising to serve Thee in Righteousness and true Holiness all the days of my Life. Oh thou Blessed Jesus! The Precious Lamb of God, whose Soul was made an Offering for Sin, and who hast declared thy readiness to receive and embrace Repenting and Returning Sinners: Receive me graciously who am weary and heavy-laden with the Burthen of my Sins, and humbly desire by Faith to approach unto thee: I own my self unworthy to gather up the Crumbs that fall from thy well-spread Table, much more unworthy to be entertained at it: But seeing such is thy condescending Grace and Love, to invite me to the participation of thy self, I do here with all humility Accept thee for my Lord and Saviour, for my King, Priest and Prophet: Oh permit me to come to thy Holy Table to Ratifie this Engagement! And Oh thou Holy and Good Spirit, the Sanctifier and Comforter of thy Church and Children, enable me to resign up my self intirely to the Guidance and Dominion of thy Grace, that I may evermore hereafter walk in the Spirit, and not fulfil the Lusts of the Flesh. And now that I am going to the Holy Table in Obedience to my Lord's Command, to Commemorate his Dying Love, vouchsafe thy Gracious Presence with me, and render thy self powerfully present to my Mind and Thoughts: Oh help me that I may attend my Lord without Distraction! Enable me to give up my self an Holy and Acceptable Sacrifice to my Redeemer, who has given himself a Meritorious Sacrifice for my Redemption. Oh help me to follow my Holy Lord's Example, in all the steps of an Imitable Vertue: Let me admire and imitate his Condescending Humility, his Fervent Charity, his Patience under Sufferings, his readiness to Forgive Injuries; and let the same mind ever be in me which was also in Christ Jesus; that having been a Welcome Guest at thy Table here on Earth, I may hereafter be Adjudged worthy to be called to the Supper of the Lamb, and may Feast with my Blessed Redeemer in his Everlasting Kingdom. All which I ask in the Mediation of Jesus Christ, saying,

Our Father, &c.

An Hymn before the Sacrament.

This day the Lord of Hosts Invites
Unto a Costly Feast,
I will take care and will prepare
To be a Welcome Guest,

But

Of Receiving the Lord's Supper.

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But ~~who~~ and ~~what~~ am I, Oh Lord,
Unholy and unfit,
To come within thy Doors, or at
Thy Table for to sit.

Awake Repentance, Faith and Love,
Awake O every Grace,
To meet your Lord with one Accord
In his most Holy Place.

Worldly distractions stay behind,
Below the Mount abide,
Cause no Disturbance in my mind,
To make my Saviour chide.

O come, my Lord, the time draws nigh
That I am to Receive.
Stand with thy Pardon Sealed by,
Perswade me to Believe.

Let not my Jesus now be strange,
Nor hide himself from me,
But cause thy Face to shine upon
The Soul that longs for thee.

Come Blessed Spirit from above,
My Soul do thou Inspire,
To come again to my Lord's Board
With fulness of Desire.

Oh let my Entertainment now
Be so Exceeding Sweet,
That I may long to come again,
And at thy Table meet.

6. Having directed you in your Preparation for this Ordinance, next understand how you are to behave your selves at and under it. First then, Come to the Ordinance with high and raised Expectations to receive great Benefit and Advantage by it, both as to the Mortifying of thy Sin, and Quickning of thy Grace: And whatever Lust it is that thou art most Captivated by, and Enslaved to, be it Pride, Passion, Earthly-mindedness, &c. let us set our selves against that Lust with all our might, and plead with God at his Table thus? Lord, I come to this Ordinance with a sincere desire and design to get Victory over every Lust, but particularly against ——— which

which doth so often sollicite and importune me; Oh let it receive its Death-wound in the Death of my Saviour, and never molest or enslave me more. Secondly, When come to thy Lord's Table, labour to call all thy Worldly Thoughts and Concerns out of thy Head and Heart, and strive to lift up thy Heart unto the Lord, as thou art exhorted by the Minister: say unto all unsuitable Thoughts, as *Abraham did unto his Servants; Gen. 22. 5. Abide you here below, whilst I go and worship the Lord yonder.* (3dly.) The better to keep all Impertinence and Improper Thoughts out of thy Mind, Entertain thy self with frequent Remembrance of the Death of Christ; at the sight of the Bread broken, and Wine poured out, call to mind at once the Passion of the Son of God, and thy Sins which exposed him to such a Painful, Shameful, and Accused Death: Represent to the Eye of your minds, your Dear Redeemer as Hanging upon the Cross, Bleeding, Sighing, Groaning, Dying under the insupportable burthen of thy Sins, and his Father's Wrath. (4thly.) When thou perceivest the Minister approaching with the Elements towards thee, put thy self in the lowliest posture of Reverence, and say thus betwixt God and thy Soul, *How beautiful are the Feet of him that publisheth Salvation, and brings the proffer of a Saviour to me! I am unworthy of Christ, but he is worthy of me and of my Faith: I do therefore, Oh Lord, with all Humility accept Thee for my King, Priest and Prophet for my Sanctifier and Saviour.* (5thly.) When thou hast received the Bread, say to this or the like effect: *Lord, I receive this broken Bread in remembrance of thy broken Body. Oh strengthen me with thy Heavenly Grace, that I may continue thine for ever, and daily encrease in thy Holy Spirit more and more, until I come to thine Everlasting Kingdom.* Amen. In like manner after thou hast received the Cup, pray to this purpose: *Oh my God; let my Soul go forth as a Giant refreshed with this Spiritual Wine, and let all the Enemies of my Salvation fall before me, may I walk in the Strength of this Spiritual Medicine all my days, and in the end of my days enjoy the full Manifestation of thy Love (which is better than Wine) in thine Everlasting Kingdom.* Amen. (6thly.) Employ your time whilst others are Receiving, Meditation and Prayer; in meditating upon the Love of the Father in sending, and upon the Love of the Son in coming upon this great Errand, to accomplish the Work of Redemption for us. Also Praying unto God for all Mankind in General, for the whole Church of God in Special, for that part of it planted in these Nations especially our own; for all our Friends and Benefactors, that God would requite the kindnesses they have shewn us; for all our Enemies that God would Pardon the Wrongs and Injuries done to him, to us, and to their own Souls. This being a Feast of Love, in which

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commemorate the highest instance of Love that ever the World was acquainted with; a greater Expression of our Love we cannot shew to our offending Brother, than in a readines to forgive him, and interceding earnestly for his Soul. *Lastly*, As an Expression of thy Thankfulness to Christ for his Mercy and Compassion towards thee, lay hold upon this occasion to shew thy Charity to his Members, that thy Prayers and thine Alms may be had in Remembrance of God; and as thou refreshest the Bowels of the Poor, so may'st thou find Mercy of the Lord in the needful day.

7. It only now remains to shew, how we ought to behave ourselves after we have waited upon Christ at his Holy Table. (1.) Decline, if possible, all Company immediately after the Action; and retire instantly into some Secret Places, and there upon your Knees offer up your Thanksgivings to Almighty God, for his Rich Mercy and Invaluable Goodness vouchsafed to you in that Ordinance; entreating him to pardon all the Defects of the whole Service, and imploring the Gracious Assurances of his Holy and Good Spirit, whereby you may be enabled to walk in the Strength of that Grace, as becometh those who have received such great Pledges of Salvation. (2.) When you are return'd into Company, take heed that the spiritual heat which was inkindled in your Souls by and under the Ordinance, be not quenched by a sudden falling into worldly Conferences and fruitless Discourses, but labour to cherish and keep alive that Holy Fire upon the Altar of your Hearts, and endeavour by Prayer, Meditation, and Holy Conference, to improve it into a Holy Flame. (3.) Spend the Sacrament-day in Publick, Private and Secret Duties of Religious worship; particularly in Prayer and Praises, in After-Examination of your selves, what Faith, what Love, what Humility, what Sincerity was found with us when waiting upon our Saviour at his Holy Table? Take notice also of any deadness of Heart and indisposition of Spirit which thou labouredst under, bewail it, and beg pardon of it for Christ's sake, who bears the Iniquities of our Holy Things. (4.) Conclude the Sacrament-day with Prayer and an Hymn of Praise. Thus did our Saviour after he had kept this Supper with his Disciples, *He sung an Hymn*, St. Matt. 26. 30. and he betakes himself to God in Prayer; and the Jews at their Passover did sing the 113th Psalm, with the five following Psalms, which they called the *Great Hallelujah*. A Christian should every day of his Life give Thanks and Pray, but especially on a Sacrament-day, then should we bless the Lord with our whole Souls, and call upon all that is within us to Bless his Holy Name; such Christians as desire to do this, but want suitable Words to express their desires in, may make use of what here followeth.

A Prayer after the Sacrament.

FOR Ever-blessed be thy Great, thy Glorious, and thy Holy Name. Oh Lord, for all thy unspeakable Favours and Benefits vouchsafed to me and to all Mankind; particularly for thy invaluable Love in giving thy dear Son to die for me in the Sacrifice, and to be my Spiritual Food and Sustenance in the Holy Sacrament. Lord, who am I, and what am I, that thou hast been pleased to admit me this day into thy Presence, to renew my Covenant with Thee, which I have so often and so perversely broken before Thee! I have once more lifted up my hand to the most High God, and sworn Allegiance to my Sovereign and my Saviour. Oh keep it in the purpose of my Heart for ever to continue stedfast in his Covenant; and let neither the Smiles of a Flattering World allure me, nor Frowns, Threats, and Terrors of an Angry World, ever able to drive me from my Duty, or hinder me in the way of well-doing. Holy Father! Accept, I beseech Thee, of that renewed Dedication which I have made of my self this day unto Thee, even of my whole Man, Soul, Body, and Spirit, to thy Service and Honour. And now Glory be to Thee, Oh God the Father! Whom I shall from this day forward, with an humble Expectation, look up unto, as my Father and God in Covenant: Glory be to Thee, O God the Son! Who hast loved me, and washed me from my Sins in thine own Blood, and art now become my Saviour, my Justifier and Redeemer: Glory be to Thee, Oh God the Holy Ghost! Who hast by the Power of thy Victorious Grace, overcome the Obstinacy of my Heart, and turned it from Sin to God. Oh Lord God! Omnipotent Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Thou become my Covenant-friend, and I through thy Grace am become thy Covenant-servant. Truly I am thy Servant, I am thy Servant heartily devoted to thy fear.

Thy Vows are upon me, Oh God! Thy Vows are upon me, I will render Praises unto Thee. Oh let me never more start aside from my Vows like a broken Bow. But give me such a steadfastness and stability of Mind, such a firmness and fixedness of Resolution, that my after Conversation may be suitable both to my present Profession and future Expectation; that so I may in all Companies, in all Conditions, walk worthy of him that hath called me to his Kingdom and Glory. And let the sense of my Redeemer's Love this day to me, inflame my Heart with a never-failing Charity unto all Mankind, whom I pray God to do good unto, especially thy Church, particularly to these Nations under her Majesty's Care and Protection, whom may Almighty God long preserve and bless in the happy Enjoyment of all Comforts; and work in the Minds of all Christians a dread of thy Name, an honour of their Superiours, and an unfeigned Charity

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wards another. All which Mercies I humbly beg in the Name of the
holy Jesus, saying,

Our Father, &c.

An H Y M N after the Sacrament.

Lord ! any Mercy short of Hell,
For Me it is too good ;
But have I eat the Flesh of Christ,
And also drunk his Blood ?

Mysterious Depths of endless Love
My Admirations raise,
Oh God thy Name exalted is
Above the highest Praise.

My Saviour's Flesh is Meat indeed,
His Blood is Drink Divine ;
His Graces dropt like Honey-combs,
His Comforts taste like Wine.

This day Christ has refresht my Soul
With his abundant Grace,
For which I magnifie his Name,
Longing to see his Face.

Oh when shall I ascend on high,
Most Holy, Just and True,
To eat that Bread and drink that Wine,
Which is for ever New !

To him that sits upon the Throne,
And Christ the Lamb therefore,
Be Glory, Blessing, Strength, Renown,
And Honour evermore.

C H A P.

CHAP. XIV. *Containing an Earnest Exhortation to the Love and Practice of Universal Holiness.*

THE Consideration of our Baptismal Vow, renewed and ratified by many Sacramental Engagements at the Holy Table, is certainly one of the strongest ties that Christianity lays upon us, to oblige us to the Love and Practice of universal Holiness; for most certain it is, if we relapse and fall back into an evil course of Life, if we wilfully return again to Folly, we kindle God's Wrath against us; we provoke him to Plague us with divers Diseases, and sundry kinds of Death: But if we escape these, there are more dismal Plagues than these that will overtake us, such as hardness of Heart, blindness of Mind, and a Seared Conscience. These are indeed invisible strokes, which make not a noise, and strike not our Senses; but verily if we consider the Effects and Consequences of them, they are more formidable and dismal than the raging Pestilence, and the loudest Claps of Thunder. Let us then piously Resolve, as we fear the Wrath of God, and love our own Souls, after we have renewed our Covenant with God at his Holy Table, to oblige ourselves to an Eminent and Exemplary Piety of Conversation: Let us live as those that are Redeemed by the Blood of Jesus, as those that are Sanctified and Sealed by the Spirit of Jesus, as those that do expect an Eternal Fellowship and Communion with Jesus in his Heavenly Kingdom.

To this end it may be very adviseable,

1. The next Morning after thou hast been at the Sacrament, as soon as thou art up, enter into thy Closet; and before the Lord piously and positively Resolve and Vow to maintain a strict Watchfulness and Care over thy Heart, Words and Ways, for the time to come. Such a Resolution as this made in the Strength of God, will work wonders, because God will Assist and Bless it. 'Twill fortifie thee against Temptations and the strongest Solicitations to return to the Love and Practice of Sin and Wickedness: Suppose thy dearest Friends and Familiars, suppose thy Indulgent Mother that bare thee, nay, suppose the Wife of thy Bosom, the Delight of thine Eyes, should all set upon thee, yea, entreat and importune thee to Omit some known Duty, or to Commit some wicked Act, such a Resolution as thou hast now made for a Holy Life, will Antidote thy Soul against the Poyson of such a Temptation, and

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ch. 39. 9. *How can I do this great Wickedness, and sin against*

2. Having made this Solemn Vow betwixt God and thy own
soul for a Holy Life, for a Life suitable to a Sacramental Engage-
ment, you will find it very advantageous to write it down and
keep it by you, thus, At such a Time, and on such a Day, Having
renewed my Covenant with God at his Holy Table, I did with all
the Devotion of my Heart and Soul, entirely surrender up my self
and all that is mine, to the Service and Glory of Almighty God,
giving all Fidelity and Obedience to him, and Resolving that he
shall have the full Guiding, Governing and Disposing of me and
mine: And after every Sacrament look upon it, and consider se-
riously of it; saying thus to thy self, "Behold, Oh my Soul,
the Bonds that are upon thee, this is thine own Act and Deed,
it is as certainly Recorded in Heaven as it is here Written
on Earth, and shall one Day be brought forth against
thee to thy Everlasting Condemnation, if thou dost not
walk answerable to the Obligation of it. Keep it by thee as
Memorial of the Solemn Transactions betwixt God and thy
soul; and besides the Influence it will have upon thy Obedience
the time of thy Life, it will afford thee no small Comfort and
Assurance at the Hour of Death, and in the Time of Tempta-
tion.

3. Make Choice of some wise and faithful Friend, and Engage
thy self by all the Endearments and Obligations of Friendship to be your
Monitor and Remembrancer; this the Apostle advises to, *Heb. 10.*
Consider one another, to provoke unto Love and to good Works.
There are two sorts of Persons that will tell us of our Faults, our best
Friends, and our bitterest Enemies: Hast thou such an Enemy?
Take use of those Rebukes with Christian Prudence, which he gives
in Sinful Anger: Art thou blest with such a Friend? Bless God for
him, let thy Heart cleave unto him, and perform a Reciprocal Duty
of Love and Faithfulness towards him, be often Admonishing, Re-
storing, Restoring, Quickning and Confirming one another; the
Advantage of such a Friendship is inexpressible.

4. Labour every day to live as in God's Sight, and to walk con-
tinually as under the View and Observation of his All-seeing Eye,
Gal. 16. 8. In all Places, and in all Companies, endeavour to re-
member the Presence of God, that he is about thy Path by Day,
and about thy Bed by Night, and espies out all thy ways: Remem-
ber that thy God seeth in secret, and that no Darkness is an Obstacle
to his piercing Eye. Remember that God is every where pre-
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sent, and then thou wilt study to be every where Holy: it is not sufficient that God's Eye sees thee, but thou must see thyself seen of God. The Masters Eye upon the Scholar will not command him to his Book, but the Scholar's seeing that his Master sees him will do it. "Oh my God! (says pious Bishop Hall) let me see my self seen of Thee, and I shall never dare to offend Thee."

5. Have frequent recourse to your Minister, your spiritual Guide, desire his Advice and follow his Instructions, in order to your Improvement in Knowledge, and Advancement in Piety. Acquaint him with thy Resolutions for Heaven and a Holy Life, desire him to give thee the needful Directions in order to it. Lay open thy very Soul unto him, and be not shy of acquainting thy spiritual Physician with all thy Soul-Complaints; hear him as thou wouldst hear Christ himself, whose Minister he is; mark what he says with the greatest Care, and follow his Instructions with the greatest Faithfulness: Acquaint him from time to time with the State and Condition of thy Soul, with thy Temptations and discouragements, with thy Doubts and Fears, with thy Failings and Imperfections, with thy Joys and Sorrows; his Counsels, by the Blessing of God, will preserve thee in an uniform, even and steady Course of Well-doing. Thy Minister is concerned to give thee the best Advice he can, and God is concerned to make it effectual to thy good, having in his Infinite Wisdom ordained it for that purpose.

6. And, above all, look up to Almighty God in Prayer, that he would make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. Offer him the entire Praise of all that good that is wrought in you, or formed by you; be Thankful to him for any measure of Knowledge received in thy Understanding, for any good Inclinations found in thy Will, for any devout Affections stirring in thy Soul, and proceed with him, that in mindfulness of his Promise, as he has begun a good Work in thee, he would perfect it unto the Day of Jesus Christ; that he would order thy Steps in his Word, and let Iniquity have Dominion over thee; that he would hold up thy hands in his ways, till thy Feet take hold of Eternal Life, that thou mayest be faithful to the Death, not beginning in the Spirit, and ending in a sad End in the Flesh; not being of the Number of those who draw back unto Perdition, but of those who persevere in Well-doing to the saving of their Souls. Amen.

F I N I S.